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A Chance for Success: Understanding How Latinx Students Make Meaning of Federal Work-Study Employment

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A CHANCE FOR SUCCESS: UNDERSTANDING HOW LATINX STUDENTS MAKE MEANING OF FEDERAL WORK-STUDY EMPLOYMENT

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Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

--Ephesians 3:20
New Living Translation

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ABSTRACT

Many students engage in Federal Work-Study as a means of additional income and part-time employment. However, few studies detail the program's overall effectiveness and impact, especially from the perspectives of students of color. This qualitative study described, by way of multiple case study design, how Latinx students employed in at least one semester of an on-campus Federal Work-Study position make meaning of their employment experience. The researcher explored the varied experiences of six undergraduate Latina women employed through work-study through the theoretical lenses of happenstance, self-authorship, and career construction. Sources of evidence used for this study included interviews, documentation, written artifacts, and archival records.

Cross-case analysis revealed that participants developed transferable skills, valued mentorship, and appreciated the convenience and flexibility of their roles. Nevertheless, several students were unable to construct meaning behind their work-study experience because they misunderstood the necessary skills for their chosen careers. Implications for both P-12 educators and higher education stakeholders include fostering a culture of career readiness in educational settings and integrating learning and professional development as key aspects of the work-study experience.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Four-year, public universities traditionally have greater numbers of students enrolled compared to other types of postsecondary institutions. Published in-state tuition and fees for four-year public universities totaled $10,440 for the 2019 – 20 academic year, which showed a slight increase from previous academic years (Ma et al., 2019). Coupled with charges for room and board, total costs for college attendance during the 2019 – 2020 academic year totaled $21,950 (Ma et al., 2019). In addition, the cost of living expenses, books and supplies, transportation, and other miscellaneous needs all add weight to the cost of higher education for many students. Countless first-generation college students (FGCS) and low-income students depend on outside supports like federal aid to offset these costs (Furquim et al., 2017). Financial aid is a vital part of college access as increasing numbers of students seek some form of assistance through loans, grants, or work-study (Alon, 2005; Baylor, 2014; Hornak, Farrell, & Jackson, 2010; Furquim et al., 2017; Scott-Clayton, 2011). Based on reports from The College Board, undergraduate and graduate students received 241.3 billion dollars in aid for the 2017-2018 academic year (Baum et al., 2018). Of this amount, Federal Work-Study (FWS) and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG) yielded 1.6 billion dollars of aid to undergraduate students (Baum et al., 2018). During that period, an estimated 601,000 undergraduate and graduate students took part in the FWS program (Baum et al., 2018).

Ballooning costs for higher education have prompted government leaders to seek methods to continue to reduce costs. In 2019, President Trump and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos released their fiscal budget, which included $4 billion in cuts to student aid programs (Douglas-Gabriel, 2018). While a two-year budget deal has delayed this proposal, the new

budget proposed to "slash nearly $790 million from the federal work-study programs" (p.2). The Trump administration acknowledged that the FWS program supports many low-income students and that it should be reformed; however, potential budget cuts risk removing employment opportunities and needed income for thousands of FGCS and low-income students. It may be assumed that one reason for targeted cuts to the FWS program is that there is little knowledge concerning the current value and effect of the program itself. Current public perception is that student employment through FWS placements is menial and not a reliable source of preparation for the workforce (Field, 2017). Minimal research and data exist concerning the FWS program's outcomes and actual impact on students outside of providing additional aid (National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators [NASFAA], 2016a). This lack of understanding of student work experiences is especially concerning for growing underrepresented populations like Latinx students that also benefit from FWS.

Employers look for new entry-level hires to have developed a particular set of both transferrable and applied skills (Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006). Students need to understand and articulate the skills they possess as they move into the workforce. This issue is especially important for minority populations that may not have the social and cultural capital to navigate the job search process and the rapidly evolving labor market. The National Association for Colleges and Employers (NACE) surveyed employers and found eight core competencies that employers desire in entry-level hires. These core competencies included: (1) professionalism and work ethic, (2) oral/written communications, (3) critical thinking and problem solving, (4) teamwork and collaboration, (5) leadership, (6) digital technology, (7) career management, and (8) global/intercultural fluency (NACE, 2018). Unfortunately, based on recent NACE surveys, employers perceive recent college graduates are either lacking many of these competencies or

are overestimating their actual abilities with these competencies (NACE, 2018). This misunderstanding of competency development can leave students ill-prepared for their futures in the workplace, especially if they have not been placed in an environment to develop these skills and establish clear professional goals for improvement.

Purpose of the Study and Research Question

Americans rank fifth globally in the percentage of adults with postsecondary degrees (Baylor, 2014). Society still places a high value on degree attainment partly because of the long-term benefits when it comes to employment and opportunity potential. Researchers have specifically noted a positive opportunity cost and return on attaining a postsecondary degree when it comes to career and lifetime earnings (Carnevale et al., 2011; Terry Long & Riley, 2007). Since higher education provides students with many enriching experiences that culminate into a postsecondary degree, are students taking advantage of on-campus opportunities as well during college and connecting these experiences to their career aspirations? Moreover, another area of concern is how educators are specifically preparing underrepresented populations for their future careers.

A growing population of interest in higher education is Latinx students who are enrolling in universities at a rapid pace (de Brey et al., 2019). An increase of Latinx graduates means an increase in potential Latinx entry-level employees. Therefore, this population of students must be prepared and equipped to meet the needs of the workforce following graduation. Flink (2018) remarked:

> Given the continued increase of Latinos in the United States and within higher education, it is important to better understand the unique challenges and obstacles inherent within this population. It is expected that the Latino population will continue to grow in the coming years. Therefore, understanding the cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic challenges that Latinos face when participating in higher education is necessary when considering pedagogical, institutional, emotional, and social needs (p.411).

I wanted to contribute data to the dearth of literature surrounding both work-study employment and Latinx student experiences to gain a better grasp on the effectiveness of this federal program and explore how students connect on-campus work to their career development. The purpose of this study was to describe, by way of collective case study design, how Latinx students employed in at least one semester of an on-campus Federal Work-Study position made meaning of their employment experience. With this in mind, the following research question was developed to guide the study: How do Latinx students connect on-campus work-study experiences to employability?

Overview of Methods

Most research concerning the FWS program has been from a quantitative approach. The goal of this study was to understand, through a qualitative approach, the unique FWS experiences of Latinx students. Each participant served as a unique "case" to be studied and the focus of inquiry. For the study, a multiple-case study design was used instead of a single-case study. This type of collective case design "is used to understand a theory or problem by combining information from individual cases" (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017, p. 38). The shared concept of the study was the meaning-making of FWS experiences; thus, a multiple-case study design appeared to fit best to showcase the variety of student experiences. As noted in the literature review (Chapter 2), there is a paucity of research focused on the experiences of students of color regarding campus employment. Therefore, it was presumed a case study at a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) might supply a different perspective into these students' experiences, specifically students who identify as Latinx. A pseudonym was given to the selected study site and each participant, protecting the identity of all participants involved in the study. Located in the southeastern area of the United States, South Urban University (SUU) is a large,

four-year, public university. SUU was selected for this study because of its unique process for work-study placement and its diverse student population. SUU was named in 2012 as an HSI by the United States (U.S.) Department of Education. At the time of this study, 31 % of the total student population identified as Hispanic[1].

At SUU, the Financial Aid Office and career services staff worked in tandem to provide students with work-study opportunities. Snowball or chain sampling was used to find cases of interest by collaborating with individuals who were knowledgeable about the phenomenon and area of study (Spickard, 2017). Gatekeepers are typically those in a position of authority to connect researchers or serve as a bridge to recruiting study participants (Spickard, 2017). Since SUU Career Services managed work-study opportunities and placements, this department served as the best network to gain access to participants who would meet the participation criteria for the study. For the participant criteria, eligible participants for the study were:

1) undergraduate students who identify as Latinx or Hispanic
2) are enrolled at least part-time at SUU
3) are currently in an on-campus work-study position and have a least one semester of work experience in an on-campus work-study

Since students at SUU also had access to awards through their state for work-study, a work-study student was defined as a student with at least one semester of work experience in an on-campus job funded solely by the FWS program. Before conducting the study, I sought approval from the Institutional Review Board at Louisiana State University and gained permission from

[1] The terms "Hispanic", "Latino/a", and "Latinx" are referenced in this study. The term "Hispanic," adopted by the U.S. Census Bureau, has been used to describe people from Spanish speaking countries irrespective of race, while the later use of "Latino/a" grew for inclusivity of individuals from Latin American countries who may not speak Spanish or have heritage from Spain (Cardemil et al., 2019; Vidal-Ortiz & Martinez, 2018). The researcher applied the term "Hispanic" throughout this study based on how it is referenced in the literature.

SUU Career Services. SUU did not require IRB approval for outside investigators. I drafted an introductory e-mail to students explaining the overall study and included a link to the demographic survey with the digital consent form. Through collaboration with the director of SUU Career Services, the email was distributed to all current Latinx students in on-campus work-study positions during the fall 2019 semester. The demographic survey was created via Qualtrics and served as a screening tool to ensure that interested students met the participant criteria. Participants were selected for the study based on the overall research criteria, their availability and willingness to participate in the study, and also by the indicated type of work-study experience. The researcher desired to have a diverse group of participants based on classifications, majors, and work experiences to provide a rich context for the study. According to Stake (2006) and Yin (2018), there is no defined number for how many cases should be included in a multiple case study. Therefore, I chose to highlight six student cases to be introduced and analyzed in the study as the optimal amount to achieve saturation.

The sources of evidence used for this study included semi-structured interviews, documentation, researcher written artifacts, and archival records. Each source of data was analyzed and culminated into overarching cross-case themes relating to the research question. To understand meaning-making of work-study experiences, the comprehensive theoretical model including Krumboltz (2009) Happenstance Learning Theory, Baxter Magolda's (2004) Theory of Self-Authorship, and the concept of narrative identity from Savickas' (2006) Career Construction theory served as the lens to interpret and analyze the data. Happenstance Learning Theory provided the guiding lens to understand how new opportunities provide spaces for learning and unexpected exposure to areas of interest. Baxter Magolda's (2004) Theory of Self-Authorship was employed to examine how students responded, and then made sense of happenstance

experiences. Lastly, Savickas' (2006) Career Construction Theory was used to understand how students construct their careers and how their career stories of FWS employment add to their narrative identity.

Limitations

This research focused on the impacts of the FWS program. The students with state-funded work-study at SUU were not reflected in this study. Interviews or observations of supervisors may have provided a different perspective, but their experiences were not the focus of this study. The study was conducted at SUU – one large, public institution located in the Southeast. While there are nearly 500 HSI's in the U.S., the results of this study were limited to the perspectives of students at SUU alone, which is another limitation to broadening understandings of Latinx student experiences. Lastly, the majority of the students that consented to participate in the study identified as female. Therefore, the study lacked in diversity by gender.

Definition of Key Terms

Employability – an understanding of an individual's unique skills or competencies that allows them to attain and maintain employment (Harvey, 2005; Suleman, 2018).

Federal Work-Study (FWS) program – a federal need-based aid program established under the Higher Education Act of 1965 that supplies part-time employment to both undergraduate and graduate students (NASFAA, 2016a).

First-Generation College Student (FGCS) – an undergraduate student who is the first in their family to enroll in college and/or neither parent obtained a four-year degree.

Happenstance – a chance or serendipitous learning experience that can influence an individual's occupational goals (Krumboltz, 2009).

Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) – a not-for-profit university that "has an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students at the end of the award year immediately preceding the date of application" (U.S. DOE, 2016a, Definition of Hispanic-Serving Institutions, para. 1).

Latinx – a gender-inclusive term, which has been often used in research, education, and academic writing to describe individuals with ethnic origins from any Latin American country (Merriam-Webster, 2018, September).

Low-income – *"*an individual whose family's taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150% of the poverty level amount" (U.S. DOE, 2019).

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the statement of the problem, the overall purpose of the study, and listed the guiding research question. The method used to implement the study was also addressed in addition to any methodological limitations. The chapter concluded with a list of five key terms that are integral to the study.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, the researcher separates the literature review into three distinct categories to provide a greater understanding of the Federal Work-Study (FWS) program and Latinx students in higher education contexts: 1) Need-Based Federal Aid, 2) Student Career Development, and 3) Latinx Students in Higher Education. First, the researcher provides an overview of federal need-based financial aid and research on outcomes of the FWS program. The section also includes details of shared challenges and characteristics of low-income, first-generation college students (FGCS) students and their connection to federal need-based aid. In the second part of the literature review, the researcher describes career development and employability, the impacts of student employment on student success, and resources available to students for their career development. The final portion of the literature review highlights Latinx undergraduate students, their path to higher education, and their current outcomes in today's workforce.

Need-Based Federal Financial Aid

For more than fifty years, the FWS program has aided thousands of students eligible for federal financial aid at both public and private institutions (NASFAA, 2016a; Scott-Clayton, 2011). Employment through work-study has provided an added source of income and a way to engage with the campus and the local community. However, scholars have claimed that the current format and structure of the FWS program could be improved to provide better outcomes for the "work" aspect of work-study (Kenefick, 2015; O'Sullivan & Setzer, 2014).

At its' start with the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, under the U.S. Department of Labor, the main purpose of FWS was to increase job opportunities for low-income students alongside other programs aimed at reducing poverty in the U.S. (Baum, 2010). A decision was

made to move the FWS program from the Department of Labor to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare as part of a measure to restructure and "firmly [establish] the federal government as the primary provider of financial aid for college" (Dynarski & Scott-Clayton, 2013, p.68). President Lyndon Johnson signed the Higher Education Act into law in 1965, which brought the FWS program under the act as part of the federal student aid system (Baum, 2010; Dynarski & Scott-Clayton, 2013). Since the passing of the Higher Education Act, college enrollment increased with more students relying on aid to support their college expenses. FWS is a campus-based aid program that has supported students with additional funding. According to reports from the U.S. DOE, over 980 million dollars were distributed to FWS for the 2015 – 2016 award year (U.S. DOE, 2015). On average, between 3,500 – 3,800 private and public institutions take part in the program annually (U. S. DOE, 2015).

College Access and Students from Low-Socioeconomic Backgrounds

Students must show financial need through their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form to be eligible for work-study. Students that qualify for work-study and other campus-based aid programs are typically low-income. The U.S. Census Bureau (2019) reported that the estimate of the weighted average poverty thresholds for 2018 for a family of four was $25,707. According to the DOE (2019), "the term 'low-income individual' means an individual whose family's taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150% of the poverty level amount."

Students who identify as low-income typically have faced many barriers to higher education access. In general, this population of students has other marginalized identities. They may be students of color or from rural areas without many resources for career and college readiness (Kezar et al., 2015). These students may also identify as FGCS, meaning they do not

have anyone in their immediate family who has either attended college or attained a college degree (Furquim et al., 2017). For the 2017 – 2018 FAFSA application cycle, more than 9 million applicants indicated that neither parent completed college (U.S. DOE, n.d.). Therefore, this population of students lacks the social, cultural, and economic capital that students from middle to high- income families may have at their disposal. Tello and Lonn (2017) defined cultural capital as "the knowledge and understanding of what it means to be in college" (p. 350). This trend has led to lower rates of college enrollment for low-income students.

Also, students and families from low-socioeconomic backgrounds tend to focus on the sticker price for colleges and do not recognize opportunities for additional funding (Kezar et al., 2015). In economic terms, individuals of low-socioeconomic statuses are more 'price elastic.' Curs and Singell (2010) stated, "Economic theory generally measures price responsiveness as an elasticity, defined as the percentage change in the number of enrollees for a given percentage change in tuition" (p. 516). In other words, students from low-and middle-income families are more sensitive or responsive to change in tuition prices, which influence their college choices.

Financing College with Federal Aid

Policymakers transformed financial aid to cover not just the needs of low-income students, but middle and even high-income families as well to make college more affordable (Dynarski & Scott-Clayton, 2013; Hillman, 2015). Need-based aid differs from merit-based aid by increasing access and supplying financial support to students regardless of their academic achievement (Feeney & Heroff, 2013). Student reliance on federal aid and the consistent distribution of student aid has led to outstanding debt in the U.S. that has surpassed $1 trillion (Baum et al., 2018). According to Santiago and Cunningham (2005), "approximately two-thirds of all student financial aid for higher education comes from federal programs administered by the

U.S. DOE" (p. 15). Known as the foundational federal aid program, approximately 7.8 million students received Pell Grant awards during the 2015-2016 school year (NASFAA, 2018). According to NASFAA (2018), "Schools must determine a student's Federal Pell Grant eligibility before calculating eligibility for other federal student aid programs" (p.4). Maximum Pell Grant awards for 2018 – 2019 increased to $6,095 (NASFAA, 2018). The number of Pell Grant recipients alone nearly tripled over the past thirty years, showing an increase in the need for aid (Dynarski & Scott-Clayton, 2013). Approximately 7.9 million students were awarded direct subsidized or unsubsidized loans with an average loan of around $3,850 (Baum et al., 2018; NASFAA, 2018). Direct PLUS/GRAD PLUS Loan borrowers, which consisted of graduate students or parents of undergraduates, totaled an estimated 855,000 recipients with average loan amounts between $14,000 and $23,000 (Baum et al., 2018; NASFAA, 2018). Other aid programs are campus-based aid programs for postsecondary education. Established in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, these programs included Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Perkins Loans, and Federal Work-Study (Dynarski & Scott-Clayton, 2013; NASFAA, 2018). Unlike loans or grants, these types of aid awards are distributed to the colleges instead of directly to students (Kelchen, 2017).

The FAFSA application has been known for its complexity and confusing federal and college deadlines, which has dissuaded students and families from applying and gaining funds they may have qualified for (Bettinger et al., 2012; Feeney & Heroff, 2013; Furquim et al., 2017). In addition, many families neglect to file their FAFSA form erroneously believing they are ineligible for federal aid (Davidson, 2013). Various questions are included in the application concerning the applicant's overall wealth. FAFSA applications are then "verified by the federal government, cross-referencing financial information with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the

Selective Service, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Social Security Administration, and others" (Feeney & Heroff, 2013, p. 2-3).

The idea of student debt is also a concern for prospective college students. Families of a low-socioeconomic background have difficulty repaying loans due to salary inequities (Davis, Green-Derry, & Jones, 2013). Herzog (2018) wrote that undergraduates' borrowing habits and reliance on loans coincide with their socioeconomic status, their educational goals, and the views of parents or peers. Students tend to borrow because they lack financial resources and will either work more hours or not enroll if they believe college education is no longer affordable (Hillman, 2015). Herzog (2018) explored the relationship between federal loan aid and enrollment persistence for first-year students and found that the influence aid has on retention depends on the amount of loan aid and remaining financial need. The more students borrow, especially at lower income levels, the greater the risk of departure following the first year.

To combat these issues and perceptions, the Obama Administration proposed a solution to tackle college access and place Americans as world leaders in college education by 2020. This plan included steps to simplifying and streamlining the FAFSA application like changing the application start date to October instead of January (U.S. DOE, 2016b). Various initiatives spearheaded by former First Lady Michelle Obama, such as Reach Higher and College Signing Day, all encouraged states to implement workshops and financial literacy programs to further educate prospective college students on FAFSA or provide individual assistance in completing the application (Curry & Milsom, 2017). According to research conducted by the Education Commission of the States, most states require FAFSA completion for state-funded financial aid, yet other states have taken more measures to engage students in the aid process (Pingel, 2017). For example, Louisiana was the first state to require FAFSA completion for public high school

students graduating in 2018 and beyond (Pingel, 2017). Utah, Oklahoma, and Texas all have embedded courses on financial literacy education in their schools (Pingel, 2017). With these programs, FAFSA application completion rates saw more growth over previous years. For the 2017 – 2018 application cycle, more than 18 million students completed their FAFSA Application (U.S. DOE, n.d.). Of that total, more than 10 million students were Pell Eligible (U.S. DOE, n.d.).

Federal Work-Study Program Details

Policymakers typically overlook the FWS program due to its small size in comparison to other financial aid programs (Kelchen, 2017). Based on Title IV Campus-Based volume reports for the 2017 – 2018 academic year, four-year public institutions provide work-study placements for an average of 180 students (Federal Student Aid, 2017 – 2018). In 2016, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation supplied funding for NASFAA and Public Agenda to research processes to improve the effectiveness of FWS for U.S. colleges and universities. Through surveys and multiple focus groups, NASFAA looked to gain insight and data from professionals working in financial aid offices about the FWS program. They found that 98% of FWS expenditures and overall management is coordinated through institutional financial aid offices (FAO) (NASFAA, 2016b). FAOs oversee expenditures, data collection, coordination of any community service or Job Location and Development Programs, work-study advertisements, student hiring and placement, and payroll management. Job Location Development (JLD) programs are "off-campus job opportunities for students regardless of financial need" (O'Sullivan & Setzer, 2014, p. 5). Some FAO's are also responsible for securing more funding for the students with institutional or departmental funds if the student exhausted their award amount before the end of their award period (NASFAA, 2016b). Some institutions may also rely on other offices such as

human resources, career centers, or the bursars' office to aid with these various administrative functions and responsibilities. With all these needs, "it is not surprising that only 19% of respondents from public 4-year institutions thought that their schools' FWS program was 'very effective'" (NASFAA, 2016b, p.16). This is partially due to the structure of the FWS program and funding.

Unlike other forms of financial aid, federal funds for FWS are sent directly to institutions and then dispersed in work-study awards to students (O'Sullivan & Sezter, 2014). To participate, institutions must annually submit the Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP) to the U.S. DOE (NASFAA, 2016a). As a base guarantee, funding is based on historical levels of funding the institution received (Baum, 2010). Under fair share allocation guidelines, funds are then increased or decreased after base guarantees are distributed depending on the financial need of students enrolled at the institution (Baum, 2010). O'Sullivan and Setzer (2014) argued that the FWS funding formula is severely flawed and inequitable as it rewards higher-priced institutions. They noted that "Out of the top 15 institutions that received the most work-study money in 2012 – 13, 12 were four-year non-profit and for-profit private schools, and four-year non-profit private schools received more money than any other type of institution" (O'Sullivan & Setzer, 2014, p. 3).

The "need" the fair share formula is based on is calculated by the difference between the cost of attendance for an institution and Expected Family Contribution (EFC) amounts (Baum, 2010). Since private institutions typically have larger costs associated with attendance, they produce a greater difference between the cost of attendance and EFC, which means they gain more FWS funding. The largest number of recipients (196,484) during the 2015 – 2016 award year for dependent undergraduates had family income levels of $60,000 or more and gained

average awards of $1,459 (NASFAA, 2018). This was followed by family income levels between $42,00 and $59,999 with 75,639 recipients with awards at $1,645 (NASFAA, 2018). The third-largest recipient group at 67,299 had family income levels of $12,000 to $23,999 with average FWS awards of $1,726 (NASFAA, 2018). Kelchen (2017) addressed this phenomenon by explaining that the fair share allowance formula "results in students from middle-income families at more expensive institutions receiving more campus-based aid than very low-income students at community colleges" (p. 450). O'Sullivan and Sezter (2014) suggested that the existing formula should shift to award FWS funds per Pell student enrolled. Baum (2019) discussed the PROSPER Act and the Democratic Aim Higher Act, introduced in 2017 and 2018:

> The two bills proposed similar challenges to the allocation formula, phasing out the existing historical allocation over several years and basing institutional allocations on a combination of the aggregate value of the Pell grants students at each college receive and their financial need (p.9).

The current administration is looking for ways to change the allocation formula so that the population that FWS was originally intended for might be better served (Douglas-Gabriel, 2018). The concept of *need* and how it is defined, however, makes modifying the formula a complicated process.

Once a student meets eligibility requirements established by the U.S. DOE through their EFC for federal aid through their FAFSA, they may be employed through work-study. FWS offers three types of positions, including on-campus roles or an off-campus position at either a non-profit or for-profit organization related to their course of study. The 1998 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act added a community service component to FWS where institutions must ensure that at least 7% of their work-study students are in community service roles. Additionally, at least one work-study placement should involve tutoring or literacy (NASFAA, 2016a). About 80% of on-campus employment typically involves administrative or clerical work

in a campus department, service area, or lab (Scott-Clayton & Minaya, 2014). If the role is off-campus, it should relate to the student's educational goals and is funded at set established percentages. For example, "FWS will only cover 50% of a student's wages for for-profit positions" (O'Sullivan & Setzer, 2014, p.5). Federal guidelines are strict concerning these placements, and there is currently not much flexibility with the types of placements offered.

In 2014, only six states (Idaho, Colorado, Pennsylvania, Washington, Minnesota, and Illinois) had developed work-study programs that allowed their students to take part in off-campus internships to gain better work experience (O'Sullivan & Sezter, 2014). New reports have shown that other public institutions are beginning to follow suit to improve student outcomes in work-study (Field, 2017). For example, the University of Iowa developed a program called Iowa GROW (Guided Reflection on Work) where supervisors have intentional conversations with their student employees on how students' work aligns with career (Field, 2017). In addition to expanding learning outcomes, Iowa GROW promoted worker engagement and helped students become better professionals in their roles. Clemson University, in partnership with their Center for Career and Professional development, created the University Professional Internship/Co-op (UPIC) program with "[offers] financial incentives to faculty and staff members to create skilled jobs for students, covering half the cost of their employees' salaries" (Field, 2017, p.6). The program boasted more than 900 students in paid internships (Field, 2017).

The last national study of the FWS program and outcomes conducted by the ED was published in 2000 and used data from 1998 (Troppe, 2000). The study showed that most students felt satisfied with the overall program and gained skills they could use in the workplace like work ethic and time management. This aspect is important for students, especially low-income

populations, who may not have the capital or resources to find opportunities to build on a career. It provided chances to work and relieved the financial burden and stressors of working or securing employment that many students face. While research on the FWS program is scarce, other reports and research demonstrated positive outcomes of FWS student employment both on and off-campus. These benefits related to career development, finances, retention, and academic performance. A few researchers examined work-study with academic performance and found that work-study has minimal adverse effects on GPA when compared to working off-campus (Parker et al., 2016; Scott-Clayton, 2011; Scott-Clayton & Minaya, 2015; Soliz & Terry Long, 2016; Stinebrickner & Stinebrickner, 2003). Alon (2005) found a positive correlation between work-study and graduation rates. Scott-Clayton and Minaya (2014) also found that FWS students are more likely than other working students to be employed long after graduating, which may be attributed to student work ethic or potential skills gained from their placement.

Unfortunately, NASFAA (2016a) noted in their literature review that few authors discussed innovations, best practices, or even the real-life experiences of work-study students. NASFAA (2016a) explained that most of the literature found focused on "government regulations, funding, and the program's general impact on students" without much more depth of insight into overall FWS program efficiency (p.11). Concerning the results of their survey of FAO staff, NASFAA (2016b) stated:

> Clearly, many responding staff members rely on their perceptions of key aspects of the FWS experience to determine the success of the program, rather than using data from students and employers. The voices of those groups remain unheard (p.8).

These results that were based on perceptions instead of data included FAO staff reports on student satisfaction with the program and employer satisfaction of their FWS student employees (NASFAA, 2016b). Data collected on the FWS program at most institutions are centered on

average FWS award amounts to students, parent income levels, and student grade point averages. FAO administrators reported that common reasons for lack of more data collection or actual use of the data collected was insufficient office staffing or not enough time to do so.

According to Kenefick (2015), the overall FWS program should be reformed to better prepare students for the workforce. They find that the barriers to career-focused work-study placements involve a lack of awareness of placement options for students, institutions, and external employers. In fact, fewer than half of four-year public institutions "believed that their school's FWS program was even 'moderately innovative'" (NASFAA, 2016a, p.16). One solution to strengthening the work aspect of FWS could be solved through changes in federal policy to the structure of the program and institutional funding. Currently, the FWS federal statute rules that "opportunities should complement and reinforce the recipients' educational program or career goals to the maximum extent practicable" (O'Sullivan & Setzer, 2014, p.7). The vagueness of the statute does not provide much specific direction for placements and lends to giving students roles that do not relate to their academic or career interests. In addition, not enough data is collected to ascertain the degree of fidelity to which these placements occur. It has placed the burden of innovation and developing career-related opportunities on FAOs.

Baum (2010) asserted that unless federal and state appropriations change, students will continue to need to work to supplement outside expenses during their college experience. Perna (2010) stated that with limited work hours and ceilings on student wages, an increase in program funding for work-study might not make a significant difference. Therefore, the quality of the work experience is what should be enhanced. Kenefick (2015) suggested that this might be achieved by better collaboration between employers and institutions and by a thorough assessment of the work-study programs. NASFAA (2016b) also suggested that changes to the

program could be enhanced by having a staff member at each campus dedicated to overseeing the quality aspect of the work experience of FWS or an FAO administrator whose sole focus would be program innovation.

Career Development of Undergraduate Students

Why Students Work

Work has become an important aspect of undergraduate life. Working while in college is necessary for some students to increase their income to finance their education or other experiences (Baum, 2010; Darolia, 2014; Perna, 2010; Scott-Clayton, 2011). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that more than 40% of full-time undergraduate students and 70% of part-time undergraduates work while in school (McFarland et al., 2017). If enrolled full-time, 17% of undergraduates work between 20 to 34 hours per week (McFarland et al., 2017). Students enrolled part-time tend to work 35 hours per week or more (McFarland et al., 2017). Students may work to gain experience in order to be competitive in the job market, to explore different career options and academic interests, meet familial or cultural obligations, or to earn money for basic living and educational expenses (Broton et al., 2016; Cheng & Alcántara, 2007; Darolia, 2014; Goldrick-Rab et al., 2009; Perna, 2010). Dundes and Marx (2007) noted in their research that students that worked off-campus felt working helped them with their efficiency and organization but had adverse effects on study time and stress levels if working more than 10 hours per week.

As a benefit, students also found that working helped them connect to the community and enhanced their social life due to their ability to afford activities they enjoy (Cheng & Alcántara, 2007). Few students worked to please parents or as an extracurricular activity to fill time (Dundes & Marx, 2007). Some undergraduate students, especially first-generation students, can

be more susceptible to lower rates of retention if they have various external responsibilities during the school year like work (Hornak et al., 2010; Furquim et al., 2017; Kenefick, 2015; Kezar et al., 2015). Ziskin et al. (2010) found that working while in school can be a source of stress for many students and that the share of full-time college students who work has continued to increase. Hornak et al. (2010) even noted that students knew they needed work opportunities and found difficulty securing employment even into the first weeks of school.

Employability and Career Competency Development

Career and college readiness can begin at an early age. The school environment focused on career readiness from P – 12 grades can propel students further in their career development and exploration. According to Curry and Milsom (2017), "…studies show that young children can realistically understand careers and need career education in order to connect academics to the world of work" (p.139). For this reason, it is also important to provide a brief overview of the status of college and career readiness in P – 12 education.

Policymakers have attempted to tackle the best method to integrate academics with career preparation. In 1994, Congress passed the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, which "provided grants to states to integrate school-based learning with work-based learning" (Ferguson, 2017, p.43). This act was met with criticism for forcing vocational training in schools.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, which amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1956, altered the accountability of schools for student achievement and placed higher standards on both students and teachers alike (Chadd & Drage, 2006; Jones, 2009). Prior to NCLB officially becoming federal law, there was a concern for overall educational outcomes of American students in the late 80s and 90s, including student reading abilities. The publication of *A Nation at Risk* by the National Commission on Excellence

[NCEE] (1983) spread the idea that there was growing mediocrity in the education system, and that the U.S. needed to tackle this issue to remain intellectually dominant against other countries (Repko-Erwin, 2017). This idea eventually led to the creation of NCLB, which focused on achievement in math, language arts, and reading, gave parents of students in low-performing schools more education options, and increased control of the spending of federal funds (Chadd & Drage, 2006).

While the initiative had good intentions such as improved outcomes for disadvantaged students and increased accountability, a focus on standardized testing "leads to so much preparation that many important aspects of education become a low priority, or they are ignored" (Jones, 2009, p. 4). The unintended consequence of NCLB was a departure from focusing on preparing students for careers and college (Curry & Milsom, 2017). Most students in college today are a product of NCLB, which means that their career education was neglected. Under the Obama Administration's "Race to the Top Initiative," states adopted the Common Core Standards with the goal to raise achievement levels in education (Repko-Erwin, 2017). In 2015, former President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which included key requirements that focused on career and college readiness (Curry & Milsom, 2017).

Making students 'career-ready' has also been a topic of discussion for higher education. There has been some debate among educators and employers on who should bear the responsibility of making graduates career-ready or employable. There are also different opinions on how 'employability' is defined (Bennett, 2002; Braun & Brachem, 2015; Harvey, 2005; Moore & Morton, 2015; Mason et al.,2009; Suleman, 2018). This discussion does not just touch on graduates in the U.S., but also on a global scale to ensure students are equipped for the job market.

Harvey (2005) explored employability in the United Kingdom (U.K.). Harvey (2005) defined employability as not just about attaining a job but "about developing attributes, techniques, or experience for life. It is about learning, and the emphasis is less on 'employ' and more on 'ability'" (p. 13). Harvey (2005) theorized that an interrelationship exists between student engagement, the institution, extracurricular activities, and pedagogy that are then reflected on and articulated in the recruitment process making the student employable. Suleman (2018) explored this topic further and found that there are many ways to align employability and competence by analyzing the variety of methods earlier researchers used to understand employability skills. For example, Suleman (2018) referenced Bennett (2002) who conducted an earlier study to understand the skills desired by employers in areas of business, marketing and finance of graduates in the United Kingdom and found that "the majority of the respondents believed that the personal skills possessed by today's graduates were poorer than in previous generations" (p.471). Bennett (2002) also reported that it seemed there was no shared understanding of the precise skills employers desired. After conducting a content analysis of 1,000 job postings, Bennett (2002) found that the most sought-after skills were communication, teamwork, information technology, and organization. The least were foreign language ability, self-confidence, initiative, and numerical skills. Bennett (2002) also found that employers were conflicted if universities or companies should be taking charge of providing students with basic transferrable skills.

Cheong et al. (2016) discovered that employers looked at values and personality along with competencies like English language ability and critical thinking skills when hiring a candidate. Suleman (2018) surmised that the uncertainty of the definition of employability and what matters in the job market is rooted in the "lack of understanding of the employers' role in

the skill acquisition process" (p.275). Suleman (2018) further questioned if employers are a customer of higher education. Suleman (2018) wrote that scholars must consider that employability is also affected by external factors outside the graduates' locus of control.

The National Association for Colleges and Employers (NACE) organization represents a sizable portion of four-year colleges and research universities in and outside of the U.S. in addition to a wide range of employers from different industries. NACE also acknowledged the lack of a definition for career readiness and the need for a shared understanding of the competencies entry-level hires need to transition into the workplace. To develop the eight NACE competencies, NACE consulted two sources: 1) the annual NACE Job Outlook Survey and 2) research conducted by Casner-Lotto and Barrington (2006). Results of their research established a list of eight core competencies such as (1) professionalism and work ethic, (2) oral/written communications, (3) critical thinking and problem solving, (4) teamwork and collaboration, (5) leadership, (6) digital technology, (7) career management, and (8) global/intercultural fluency (NACE, 2018).

Casner-Lotto and Barrington (2006) used survey methods to research the perspectives of 431 U.S. employers about the skillsets they believed were most critical for future graduates. Through this survey, they found that most employers agreed on skills college graduates need for the workforce. While there was still disagreement among employer respondents on who should handle career readiness, Casner-Lotto and Barrington (2006) concluded that:

> All stakeholders (business, educators, and community members) should consider methods of enhancing important workplace skills. For example, internships, summer jobs, work-study programs, job shadowing, mentoring, on-the-job training, as well as other educational approaches that include real-world experiences or community involvement, provide opportunities for students to acquire basic knowledge and skills while cultivating applied skills (p.58).

The 2019 NACE Job Outlook Survey, a forecast of hiring intentions of employers for recent college graduates, reported that "employers plan to hire 16.6% more new graduates from the Class of 2019 than they did from the Class of 2018" (p.4). In terms of screening potential candidates, the top attributes employers were seeking included communication skills (written), problem-solving skills, the ability to work in a team, initiative, and analytical/quantitative skills (NACE, 2019).

Characteristics of On-Campus Student Employment

Scholars have debated the pros and cons of student employment for many years and the value of on-campus employment over off-campus employment. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) believed increased hours of off-campus employment (e.g., 35 to 40 hours per week or more) could hinder academic success and completion. The exact opposite was found for working on-campus (Astin, 1984; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Pascarella et al. (1994) explained that the reasons for these differences were not clear but "one logical explanation that has been advanced is that on-campus employment enhances student involvement and integration in the institution, while off-campus work tends to inhibit them" (p.364). Similarly, Astin (1993) found that working full-time off-campus while enrolled in college negatively impacted grades. However, through further research, Pascarella et al. (1994) found that neither on nor off-campus employment had significant negative influences on cognitive development or grades.

There still appears to be distinct benefits to on-campus employment. In his research, Kuh (2008) promoted the need for high-impact educational practices and listed on-campus employment as one of the many ways students can gain a richer learning experience. Hornak et al. (2010) and Ziskin et al. (2010) saw that on-campus work could aid in retention as students learn to balance their work experiences with other responsibilities. Yeh (2010) saw that on-

campus employment and service-learning provided spaces for new ways of learning and enhanced what students gained in the classroom. Fede et al. (2018) wrote, "…on-campus jobs may convey greater benefits as they tend to limit hours worked, and channel student time and energy toward activities that deepen learning engagement, and self-efficacy" (p. 109). In their study, they saw the impact of community-service based student employment in the University of Rhode Island (URI) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP; formerly the Food Stamp Program) Outreach Project and its influence on skill development and learning. Researchers found that former SNAP project workers performed well academically, graduated from college, developed transferrable skills for a career, and grew to be more civically engaged (Fede et al., 2018). Soliz and Long (2016) found that the convenience of working on campus and the support of supervisors, along with the limited work hours, allowed students to focus on academics. Optimal employment for students is between 10 – 20 hours per week. This schedule is best not to hinder academic performance (McCormick et al., 2010).

Lewis (2010) observed that other on-campus programs focused on the student experience typically had established learning outcomes designed to enhance student development. He hypothesized that on-campus employment had the potential to offer similar learning opportunities, given the right environment. Lewis (2010) asked student employees to rate their strengths in five different learning domains and 13 workplace experience areas like problem-solving and leadership. He then asked supervisors to rate each student employee in the same learning domains and workplace experiences. Lewis (2010) found that twelve of the 13 workplace experiences were positively correlated with learning. Based on his research, Lewis (2010) remarked that the workplace served as another area for student learning and growth. The potential impact of supervision and mentorship gained from on-campus employment is

important. Lewis (2010) stated, “many administrators and professionals in higher education who supervise student employees may neglect their role as educators, preferring instead to limit their oversight merely to job performance” (p.155). Lack of interest or lack of awareness of student outcomes was a detriment to student workers and a lost opportunity for the development of career skills. Lewis (2010) wrote that supervisors might provide better opportunities for student success through both summative and formative evaluations during the school year. Lewis (2010) suggested that these evaluations might occur both mid-year and toward the end of the year to help students understand expectations and areas for growth. Lewis (2010) also suggested that job descriptions could also be revised with clear, explicit learning outcomes so the student further understands expectations and job performance can be better assessed.

Role of Career Services

Vocational guidance and the role of career centers have evolved since the 1970s and have become a mainstay on most college campuses (Vinson et al., 2014; Schaub, 2012). After surveying senior student affairs officers, Vinson et al. (2014) found that senior student affairs officers believed career services offices have become more valuable over 30 years. Schaub (2012) stated that students and employers alike rely on career services because of the variety of resources and how these offices meet both placement and educational needs.

According to the NACE 2017 – 18 Career Services Benchmark Survey Report (Koc et al., 2018), a growing number of career services offices report to either academic affairs, a specific school within the university, or have a dual reporting structure. The services most offered by career centers are “coaching/counseling/advising by appointment, internship assistance, career fairs, career assessment tools, and career workshops” (p.4). Survey respondents in the report stated that they also used electronic support systems or platforms to engage students

and alumni further (Koc et al., 2018). These systems may include online job boards, fairs, and even virtual counseling and job search preparation (Schaub, 2012).

Most career counselors or coaches help students understand and recognized their interests and values and how these align with their career choice. They may employ various assessments or other vocational tools to educate students on this aspect of self-discovery (Schaub, 2012). Allan et al. (2017) surveyed career counselors to better understand if career counselors addressed meaningful work and believed it was an important focus of career counseling. Based on these results, Allan et al. (2017) claimed that career counselors do make an effort to help students find meaningful work through discussing majors or careers that would be meaningful to them and contribute to their personal growth. Unfortunately, "not enough students seek out career counseling, and thus most are unprepared with the personal and career knowledge needed for making important decisions about their majors, their jobs and their lives" (Lopez, 2014, p. 4). With some of these centers being underutilized, undergraduate students may miss an opportunity to engage with a valuable campus resource. If career service offices continued to reimagine their services and adapt to the changing world of recruitment and work, students would continue to benefit from the resources provided. Lewis (2010) suggested that institutions should look to create a campus culture of career development to improve workplace learning and encourage more collaborations. Similarly, McCormick et al. (2010) stressed that faculty, advisors, and staff should seek to integrate career development into the student experience. Collaborations with on-campus partners like career centers can help FAOs in their promotion of work-study positions and student outreach to promote the value of these placements. NASFAA (2016b) even reported that FAO administrators found their FWS programs to be more effective when centered around career development and by collaborating with campus career centers.

Latinx Students in Higher Education

A growing number of researchers have narrowed their focus on Latinx student populations as the demographics of the U.S. have begun to shift (Alcocer & Martinez, 2018; Arbelo-Marrero & Milacci, 2016; Arana & Blanchard, 2018; Duncheon, 2018; Garcia & Dwyer, 2018; Flink, 2018; Tello & Lonn, 2017). In 2017, the Hispanic population in the U.S. rose to 58.9 million, which is 18.2% of the U.S. population, making Hispanics the largest ethnic minority in the country (U.S. Census, 2018).

A growing concentration of Hispanics live in California, Florida, and Texas, with rapid growth in the South and Midwestern areas of the U.S. (Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities [HACU], 2018). Hispanics are not a homogenous population but "are in fact a heterogeneous population made up of individuals with a wide variety of backgrounds, nationalities, ethnicities, social and economic conditions, and levels of English-language proficiency" (Flink, 2018, p. 404).

Concerning higher education, "3.29 million Hispanics were enrolled in non-profit institutions in 2016, including Puerto Rico" and "46.0% (1,403,736) of Hispanic undergraduate students attend two-year institutions (compared to 36.6% of all undergraduates)" (HACU, 2018). These rates show that Hispanic undergraduate enrollment more than doubled between 2000 and 2016 (de Brey et al., 2019). A substantial proportion of Latinx undergraduates are U. S. citizens, are enrolled part-time, and are less likely to live on campus (Santiago & Cunningham, 2005). Flink (2018) argued that colleges have struggled to retain Latinx students in part because this population has been understudied and overlooked. Influxes in Latinx college enrollment have led educators to seek best practices to ensure the needs of this population are met and that Latinx students feel welcomed on college campuses.

Latinx Student Populations in College

It would be remiss to discuss Latinx students without first exploring college access and how it affects their transition into higher education. Numerous studies have addressed that while Hispanics are the fastest-growing minority population in the United States, they face many barriers and equity gaps to degree attainment in the transition from K-12 to college (Duncheon, 2018; Flink, 2018; Gonzalez, 2015; Tello & Lonn, 2017). A lesser percentage of Latinx students earn bachelor's degrees compared to other racial and ethnic groups (Duncheon, 2018; Tello & Lonn, 2017). Duncheon (2018) explained that this gap is significant because Latinx students "are disproportionately likely to be low-income and first-generation, factors associated with lower likelihood of college completion" (p.358).

Low-income and FGCS populations face many barriers when it comes to access to higher education, and this issue is even more prevalent for Latinx populations (Flink, 2018; Santiago & Cunningham, 2005). Gonzalez (2015) identified three barriers to college access for Latinx students through synthesizing literature: relational (i.e. family and peers), individual, and systemic. *Relational barriers* for Latinx students are rooted in low career and college readiness capital, including less parental involvement in college planning. Latinx students may also face *individual barriers* from an academic standpoint with a lack of proficiency in specific skills like study skills or language skills. Lastly, *systemic barriers* connect to access to college readiness programs and poor policies centered on education for Latinx students at the P – 12 level (Gonzalez, 2015). Tello and Lonn (2017) wrote that "In 2008, 15 million [first-generation college students] were enrolled in higher education, and approximately 4.5 million were from low-income backgrounds" (p. 349). For Latinx students, they may also be children of immigrants, which could add another barrier due to the lack of familial support and

understanding in navigating college access in the United States. Also, many Latinx students may face linguistic barriers with honing their English-language skills before enrolling in college (Flink, 2018). Flink (2018) explained that "some [Latinx students] may have to study ESL (English as a Second Language) for several years prior to having enough confidence and proficiency to begin college-level coursework" (p.410).

Hillman (2015) noted that inequalities in both the labor market and racial disparities by wealth also caused students of color to have the greatest need to borrow to pay for college. Latinx students pay for college via grants, loans, work-study, personal contributions, or a combination of options (Santiago & Cunningham, 2005). Based on NCES data, among full-time, full-year undergraduate students, 82 % of Hispanic students received grants, and 50 % received loans during the 2015 – 16 academic year (de Brey et al., 2019). Latinx undergraduates received slightly less state aid or institutional aid compared to other undergraduate populations (de Brey et al., 2019). For undergraduate federal campus-based aid, a vast majority of recipients identified as White at 46.9% (NASFAA, 2018). Without including smaller sample sizes of recipients who identify as "Other" or mixed race, Black or African American students made up 20.5% of recipients, and Latinx students made up 21.5% (NASFAA, 2018). According to Santiago and Cunningham (2005), "A relatively high proportion of Latino undergraduates have expected family contributions (EFCs) of $1,000 or less – 42 %, compared to 30 % of all undergraduates" (p.5). Specifically, Latinx undergraduates were more likely to receive financial aid at public four-year institutions. The growing Hispanic population in the United States also included undocumented students, with an average of 65,000 undocumented students graduating from high school each year (Nienhusser, 2018). While under debate, some students of undocumented status are protected under the *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals* (DACA) program, which

provides access to lawful employment, including on-campus employment, and protection from deportation (Kantamneni et al., 2016). Unfortunately, undocumented students are not eligible for federal financial aid and have different costs for tuition, with some students paying out-of-state tuition rates, depending on the policies of the state where they live (Kantamneni et al., 2016; Thangasamy & Horan, 2016).

Despite all the obstacles, Latinx students repeatedly overcome challenges in pursuit of a college education. In fact, "the number of bachelor's degrees awarded to Hispanic students more than tripled between 2000 – 01 and 2015 – 16" (de Brey et al., 2019, p. vi). Duncheon (2018) conducted a case study to understand the college transition of high-achieving Latinx youth who were enrolled in a magnet program in a high-poverty urban neighborhood. Based on participant observations, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis, Duncheon (2018) wrote that many students felt unprepared academically, which was a major source of insecurity. However, these students sought out many resources to be successful and made efforts to integrate into the campus community to overcome feelings of unpreparedness. Tello and Lonn (2017) observed in their study that while some Latinx students may be behind their peers on college readiness, students showed strong coping strategies and a keen sense of resiliency that has helped them persist in achieving their goals.

Latinx Student Employment and Postgraduation Outcomes

Latinx students showed similar trends compared to other undergraduate students with student employment. In particular, 40.6 % of all Latino students were employed part-time while enrolled, and 38.2 % were employed full-time (Santiago & Cunningham, 2005). Concerning employment outside of higher education, the Bureau of Labor Statistics highlighted that 26.8 million Latinx individuals made up the U.S. labor force in 2016 (Bureau of Labor Statistics &

U.S. Department of Labor, 2017). The 2015 – 16 academic year showed a significant increase in bachelor's degrees awarded in business overall, with 18 % of Hispanic students graduating in business (de Brey et al., 2019). Forty-one percent of Hispanic students graduated with associate degrees in the field of liberal arts and sciences, general studies, and humanities (de Brey et al., 2019). Hispanics also showed high attainment of master's degrees in business and education (de Brey et al., 2019). Still, an earnings gap exists for African Americans and Latinos regardless of the level of educational attainment (Bureau of Labor Statistics & U.S. Department of Labor, 2016; Noël, 2018). The NCES reported median annual earnings for Hispanics at $33,900, and higher earnings for individuals ages 25 – 34 with a bachelor's or higher degree at $49,300 (de Brey et al., 2019).

Characteristics of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI)

The reauthorization of the Higher Education Act signed by George H. W. Bush in 1992, in an effort led by HACU, provided the designation for Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). The act defined HSI's as "not-for-profit institutions of higher learning with a full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate student enrollment that is at least 25 % Hispanic" (U.S. DOE, 2016a). According to Flink (2018), "HACU is currently the only recognized source of local, state, and federal advocacy for HSIs" (p. 408). The number of HSIs more than doubled from 1994 to 2016, with a total of 492 federal HSIs (HACU, 2018). In 2016, 215 HSIs were public two-year institutions, 120 public four-year institutions, 135 private four-year institutions, and 22 private two-year institutions (HACU, 2018). Today, Texas, California, Florida, and Puerto Rico have the largest number of both Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) and emerging HSIs (HACU, 2018).

Unlike Historically Black Colleges and Universities or Tribal Colleges, HSIs have their designation based on their enrollment profile and not their founding mission (Fosnacht & Nailos,

2016). For example, HSI's are typically located in areas with high concentrations of Hispanics and may have been institutions that were previously predominantly White. For this reason, there is a lack of clarity on the organizational identity of HSI's and what it means to be *Latinx-serving* (Garcia & Dwyer, 2018). Garcia and Dwyer (2018) asserted that, with HSIs being a newer designation, they do not have a strong history to form their identity.

Guardia and Evans (2008) explored how HSI's enhance or contribute to Latino identity development through semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a Latino fraternity at an HSI and found that HSI's do contribute to ethnic identity development. Arbelo-Marrero and Milacci (2016) further affirmed the experiences of Hispanic nontraditional students at an HSI in their phenomenological study. They found that the various microsystems of family, personal aspirations, the campus environment of an HSI, life challenges, and language barriers all affect students' persistence and behaviors. Specifically, the environment of an HSI provided Latinx undergraduate students with a sense of belonging and support. Students also perceived that the presence of Hispanic faculty and administrators added to an environment of acceptance, mentorship, and trust (Arbelo-Marrero & Milacci, 2016).

Fosnacht and Nailos (2016) noted that the number of HSIs and the enrollment of Latinx students changed dramatically over the past decade. Therefore, they measured the gains and benefits of attending an HSI for Latinx students. Utilizing data from the 2013 and 2014 administrations of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), they found that HSI attendance did have a small positive effect on student engagement and perceived gains when compared to non-HSI students. Gushue (2006) determined that Latinx students develop a stronger ability to engage in career decision making and self-efficacy when they have prominent identification with their ethnic group. Arana and Blanchard (2018) defined this behavior as

'ethnic loyalty,' which increased engagement and participation in campus activities at an HSI. Franco and Hernández (2018) argued that while some research has shown that HSIs are Latinx-serving through a positive and supportive campus climate, much more work can be done in assessing the service provided to Latinx college students instead of having an aspirational practice. These outcomes might include assessing the employability and career readiness of Latinx students at HSIs and whether they are being equipped for the world of work.

Theoretical Framework

The following section identified the literature surrounding theories from both career development and student development perspectives. The first section provides insight into a few ideas and principles surrounding career development, while the latter portion will cover student maturity and development in higher education. Krumboltz (2009) Happenstance Learning Theory, Savickas (2006) Career Construction Theory, and Baxter Magolda's (2004) Theory of Self Authorship will serve as theoretical foundations to form the overall comprehensive theoretical framework for my research.

Chance Events and Connection to Career

Work for the 21st century has shifted due to many technical and digital advancements that have globalized the market. The study of chance events and its' influence on career development has been studied as the world of work transforms. Rice (2014) defined 'chance events' as "factors that have the unique qualities of being unpredictable and unplanned for" (p.446). Previously, scholars and those in the career counseling profession believed that career decision making occurred through a rational orientation where individuals used reasoning and logic to choose an occupation (Bubany et al., 2008). This notion has since been challenged through alternative or "nonrational" models that assert that the future is uncertain, and events that

influence career decision-making occur through happenstance or planned happenstance (Bubany et al., 2008). The basis for this idea is that "an active approach to career decision making will lead to an increase in one's well-being by the way of opportunities" (Bubany et al., 2008, p. 179).

Through an exploratory study, Scott and Hatalla (1990) sought to understand the retrospective views of women college graduates on chance factors that may have influenced their career choice. After yielding 94 usable questionnaires from 487 female graduates, they found that predictable internal factors such as an awareness of skills or educational level had a greater impact on career decision than chance; however unexpected personal events such as a geographic move or family death may have made some of the participants rethink their career choice. Betsworth and Hansen (1996) further explored this idea in their quantitative study to understand if serendipity or happenstance played a role in career development. They defined serendipitous events as "events that were not planned or predictable, but had a significant influence on [an individuals'] career" (Betsworth & Hansen, 1996, p. 94). Participants included 148 women and 89 men, all alumni of the same large Midwestern university. Participants answered a questionnaire about career decision making. Two-thirds of the participants perceived their careers were influenced by serendipitous events or happenstance; these events or critical incidents included professional or personal connections, unexpected advancements, and even unexpected exposure to occupations of interest (Betsworth & Hansen, 1996). The study showed the importance of considering happenstance in career decision making and how unplanned events in life can impact the trajectory of one's future.

Following the study conducted by Betsworth and Hansen (1996), other researchers explored the influence of chance events for career development and came to similar conclusions.

Bright et al. (2005) hypothesized that various environmental factors between the proximal environment (e.g., parents and friends) and the distal social environment (e.g., the media and chance or unplanned events) are associated with career decision making. Bright et al. (2005) found through their survey of 651 undergraduate and graduate students that "unplanned events were consistently cited as an influence on career decision-making across Educational level and Gender" (p.32).

Chance events have been studied internationally as well. Hirschi (2010) conducted two studies – one longitudinal and one retrospective design – of Swiss high school students on the role of chance in career transition. Participants from low-socioeconomic backgrounds or with less access to resources perceived chance to have more of an impact on their career development than those from high socioeconomic backgrounds. Furthermore, the results of Hirschi's (2010) study showed that individuals who found chance events impactful had a certain level of openness in their personality that allowed them to capitalize on serendipitous events.

Kim et al. (2014) included the factor of self-efficacy in their study to understand if planned happenstance skills had any influence on career decision self-efficacy, occupational engagement, and career decision certainty. Kim et al. (2014) distributed questionnaires to 229 Korean college students at a university in Seoul. They found no statistically significant correlation between planned happenstance skills and career decision certainty, but they did find a positive correlation between planned happenstance skills and career engagement. They concluded that:

> Some individuals can be enriched by happenstance events whereas others cannot. The results of this research indicate that planned happenstance skills can be one of an individual's abilities to make the best use of surrounding context or potential career opportunities (p.66).

McIlveen et al. (2011) conducted a study to understand approaches to career development learning at universities in Australia. In their transformative career development learning model (TDCL), McIlveen et al. (2011) illustrated career development learning and reflective learning as a two-way mirror. McIlveen et al. (2011) defined career development learning as "the means by which individuals can successfully manage their lives, learning, and work" and that it aims to help students understand themselves and learn how to transition to the world of work (p. 151). The learner or students with both external and internal influences reflected on the overall workplace and then also self-reflected on career competencies and learning. One commonality seen through all these studies is the clear influence of chance and that college fosters an environment for career decision making. Overall, it is beneficial for students to reflect on their career exploration experiences and gather more career information to progress toward career decision-making (Cheung & Arnold, 2014).

Happenstance Learning Theory

Unlike traditional theories of career counseling, Krumboltz's (1996) Happenstance Learning Theory (HLT) is based on learning theory or learning principles. Rice (2014) explained that "theories based on learning principles focus on how decision-making processes are affected by environmental factors and in turn, how these decision-making processes influence how people respond to future environmental events" (p.450). Krumboltz (1996, 2009) asserted that most of the moments that influence career occur through serendipitous or 'happenstance' events. These events can lead to learning and influence human behavior and impressions of the environment.

Krumboltz (2009) suggested that different situations or events in life provide an opportunity for learning. He theorized that individuals begin navigating career development at an early age through associative learning experiences, environmental conditions and events, by the

influence of parents, caretakers, and peers, and their educational setting (Krumboltz, 2009). He explained that "human behavior is the product of countless numbers of learning experiences made available by both planned and unplanned situations in which individuals find themselves" (Krumboltz, 2009, p.135). Concerning career choice, different situations in life may provide a wealth of opportunities and influence career development since no one knows what the future will hold. Having experienced many different occupations himself, Krumboltz (2009) recognized the value of each experience he had and how it shaped his roles as an author and scholar. He stated, "So if we career counselors could not have predicted our own destiny, what business do we have insisting that young people predict their occupational goals?" (p.136). Krumboltz (2009) called on career counselors and educators to consider how they are fostering an environment that prepares clients for unplanned events and how to recognize opportunities. He explained that career counselors and educators could contribute to both learning and meaning-making to help students recognize opportunities in any situation, remain open-minded, and learn how the event can enhance their career development. This takes guidance and partnership to empower clients to be more open-minded and understand their personal interests.

Career Construction Theory

Many individuals go through many career transitions in their lifetime. With those many decisions and transitions, people must discover how to manage their careers. Savickas (2006) Career Construction Theory within the life-design paradigm framed how career counselors can assist clients in reflecting on their experiences to create a work-life. Savickas (2006) Career Construction Theory is divided into three distinct areas: (1) life themes, (2) vocational personality, and (3) career adaptability. Each area affects how an individual, as the author, creates meaning in the ever-changing world of work.

Career construction interviews and assessments are a form of narrative therapy that is focused on client stories or their life themes. The elements of the career construction interview include stimulus questions about (1) role models, (2) favorite television shows, (3) current favorite stories, (4) favorite mottos or sayings, (5) and early childhood recollections. These stories evoke themes that help the client better understand themselves, specify an occupation, and then actualize the choice (Savickas, 2019). Savickas (2019) explained, "Career construction theory, simply stated, holds that individuals build their careers by imposing meaning on vocational behavior. The meaning held in implicit themes weaves through explicit plots that compose the micronarrative about vocational identity" (p.27). Career construction theory involves constructing self and identity through narrative identity. Narrative identity "tells a story about self, a narrative of becoming oneself in response to the continuous changes that occur during the life course" (p.22). To develop the narrative, Savickas (2019) suggested the use of micronarratives, small stories of different significant experiences, that then build into the larger story or macronarrative. All the stories help clients develop and refine their identity narrative and act on their career choices.

Savickas (2006) defined 'vocational personality' as an individual's skills, values, or interests that they possess related to career, which then forms a reputation among a group of people. These can be formed and expressed not solely through the workplace, but through any activity like hobbies or games. The individual's external environment can also influence them. Career construction theory focuses on how a vocational personality evolves and adapts through work.

The third area of 'career adaptability' involves the cycle of adaptation through behaviors of (1) orientation, (2) exploration, (3) establishment, (4) management, and (5) disengagement.

Savickas (2006) explained that these behaviors are cyclical and occur with new events like changing jobs or entering new roles. To adapt effectively, Savickas (2006) posited that the individual possesses concern, control, curiosity, and confidence in their vocational future. He wrote, "Increasing a client's career adaptability is a central goal in the goal of career construction counseling" (p.88).

Self-Authorship and Maturity

Holistic theories supporting the development of the whole individual can help researchers best understand how college students make sense of the world and mature. Influenced by Kegan's (1982) research in *The Evolving Self*, Baxter Magolda (2004) established the theory of self-authorship in application to understanding the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal development of the whole student. Each stage requires the individual to process these three areas: 1) "How do I know?" 2) "Who am I?" and 3) "What kind of relationships do I want to construct?" To reach the stage of self-authorship, Baxter Magolda (2004) theorized that students enter distinct phases of development. The first phase, coined "Following External Formulas," meant the student is more inclined to heed the advice of trusted individuals in authority like family and adopt their beliefs. Students in this phase assume that those in authority have the answers, which appears when students decide to choose a major, for example.

Once multiple perspectives begin to challenge their set of beliefs, students enter the "Crossroads" phase. Baxter Magolda (2009) compared this phase to a 'shipwreck.' While a potentially jarring experience, the shipwreck allowed "young adults to push away from the dock of external authority to explore the waters for themselves" (Baxter Magolda, 2009, p.630). In this phase, a student would begin to hear and listen to their internal voice and cultivate their own opinions and beliefs. In the final phase of "Self-Authorship" and similar to HLT, "[students]

recognized that reality, or what happened in the world, and their lives, was beyond their control, but their reactions to what happened was within their control" (Baxter Magolda, 2009, p.631). See Figure 2.1 for a model of Baxter Magolda's (2004) Theory of Self-Authorship.

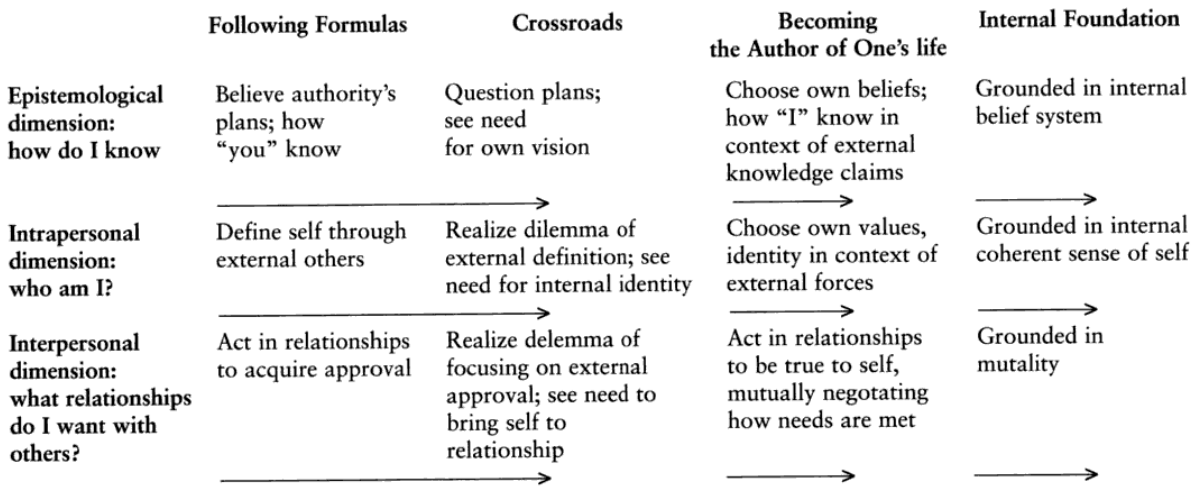

Figure 2.1. Four Phases of the Journey toward Self Authorship. Reprinted from *Making Their Own Way: Narratives for Transforming Higher Education to Promote Self-Development* by Marcia B. Baxter Magolda (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC) with permission of the publisher, Copyright © 2004, Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Self-authored students trust their mature voice, have established internal foundations, and opens themselves to varying perspectives and ideas. In her book, Baxter Magolda (2004) described a longitudinal study that she conducted to understand the self-authorship journey of 39 young adults. She addressed the various complexities of being young and having to make tough decisions, like choosing a career. The workplace was the strongest site for identity development and transformation into becoming self-authored, and her study showcased how important career decision-making is in identity development for young adults.

Baxter Magolda (2004) explained that "success in contemporary work setting requires complex epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal development" (p.240). Some study

participants had difficulty transitioning into the workplace because they had ‘followed formulas’ during their undergraduate work experience and were now challenged to find their own voice outside the university. Concerning student employees, Baxter Magolda (2004) wrote that educators and supervisors often underestimate the skills and knowledge of the student or are more focused on work performance and less on education. She maintained that places of work on-campus should be situated in learning through trusting the students, providing them spaces to think critically, and collaborating with supervisors and coworkers. Baxter Magolda (2004) argued:

> If educational practice were to model these work settings in campus work roles, campus employers would give student employees autonomy to understand and work with complexity rather than frame their roles as implementers of others' decisions. Too often teaching assistants, research assistants, paraprofessional staff, and student service providers simply carry out orders from some higher authority. This simply reinforces authority-dependence. To promote self-authorship (and more effective work performance), supervisors should validate student employees as capable of handling complexity, give them meaningful work responsibilities, and afford them a reasonable degree of autonomy to perform their work (pp. 251-252).

Based on the results of the study, Baxter Magolda (2004) believed that work settings that promote self-authorship are essential for proper student development and the emergence of an internal sense of self.

Nadelson et al. (2015) used a self-authorship framework to understand REU outcomes, including professional identity development in their study of undergraduate STEM research experiences. In applying a mixed-method approach of surveys and interviews of 10 undergraduate students engaged in a 10-week-long research program, they found that the experience influenced students’ career decisions in STEM. Nadelson et al. (2015) found that students developed a “more self-authored perspective” through developing internal confidence in their abilities, mentorship, enhancement of scientific knowledge, and through engagement with

the scientific community (p. 8). The students in the study had a better understanding of their career path options by being able to explore and having the space to become self-authored.

Creamer and Laughlin (2005) also described how self-authorship connected to career decision making:

> Self-authorship plays a role in career decision making because it influences how students make meaning of the advice they receive from others; how susceptible they are to negative feedback, including from peers; and the extent to which the reasoning they employ to make a decision reflects an internally grounded sense of self.
> Self-authorship differs from agency because it is not about behavior; it differs from self-efficacy because it is not about self-confidence. Self-authorship is about the cognitive process people use to make meaning. (p.14)

Creamer and Laughlin (2005) used self-authorship as the framework to guide their mixed-method explanatory sequential study in understanding how women interpret advice in their career decision making. They conducted a questionnaire and distributed it to 116 undergraduate women. They then asked interview questions framed by each dimension of self-authorship: interpersonal, epistemological, and intrapersonal. Creamer and Laughlin (2005) found that most of the women trusted parents or family members over the advice of others in positions of authority like advisors or faculty. Few students in their study indicated that they looked to staff or career counselors for advice with a career decision. While this study highlighted a different perspective on self-authorship, it showed how students in the 'Following Formulas' or 'Crossroads' phase are hesitant to trust in their own internal voice and beliefs concerning major decisions impacting their futures.

Baxter Magolda and King (2007) wrote, "Educational practices that are intentionally designed to foster self-authorship hold great promise for higher education's success in helping students achieve contemporary learning outcomes" (p. 494). The studies from Nadelson et al. (2015) and Creamer and Laughlin (2005) highlight the issue that faculty, counselors, and staff in

universities could seek diverse ways to encourage self-authorship, validate or challenge student views, and provide opportunities for learning, growth, and support.

Comprehensive Theoretical Framework

Krumboltz (2009) Happenstance Learning Theory, Savickas (2006) Career Construction Theory, and Baxter Magolda's Theory of Self-Authorship (2004) best guided the purposes of this study to understand how Latinx students make meaning of their FWS work experience at an HSI and connect it to employability. The first portion of the model includes Happenstance Learning Theory (Krumboltz, 2009) and the idea that new or planned opportunities, events, or unexpected exposure to a career interest area can produce new learning opportunities. The individual or student may then react to the chance experience in either a positive or negative manner. With their work-study placement as a new experience, students work in a happenstance or planned happenstance environment and space for learning (Lewis, 2010). The initial exposure serves as the catalyst for meaning-making to occur. The student's reaction to that exposure connects to the guiding ideas of the Theory of Self-Authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2004), which focuses on the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal ways that students make meaning of experiences.

Each phase reflects a stage of their development and how they interact with their environment. Like Creamer and Laughlin (2005) and Nadelson's (2015) study involving self-authorship as a framework, a student in initial stages of self-authorship may show more signs of being influenced by external others and lack personal vision or self-definition. On the other hand, a student who has matured in self-authorship knows their identity and values and can better communicate these ideals through "internal references" and by displaying that they have taken over more control of their experiences toward their career development (Nadelson, 2015, p. 6). A parallel exists between the maturity principles of self-authorship and the concept of constructing

a narrative identity through micronarratives. The short stories that create micronarratives are built from different influential events in an individual's life, which could include chance or happenstance events. Therefore, as students gain different experiences via happenstance or planned happenstance like campus work-study, these small events, experiences, or moments build into components of their overall narrative identity. See Figure 2.2 for a visual representation of the comprehensive theoretical model.

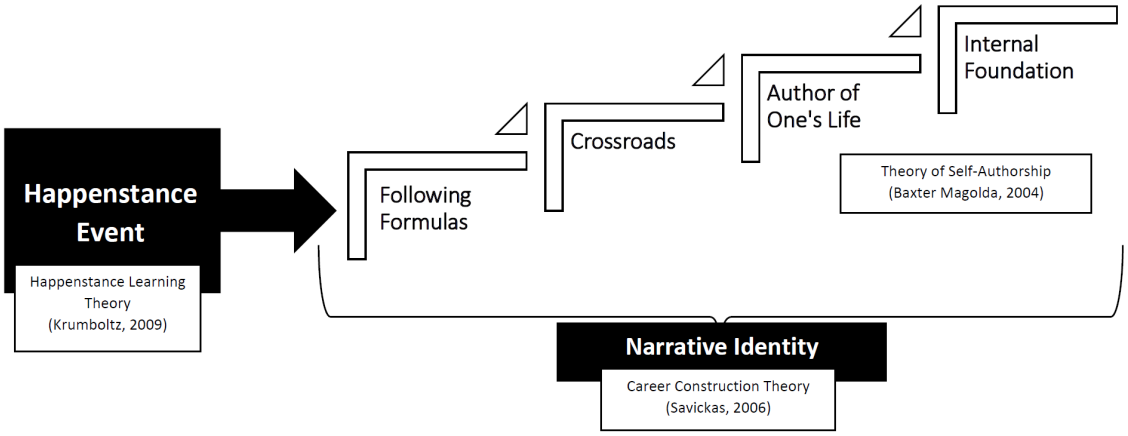

Figure 2.2. Comprehensive Theoretical Model

Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed the current structure of the FWS program and areas for improving the on-campus work experience given to students. The chapter also explained Latinx student experiences in higher education and the growth of HSI's. The final theoretical frameworks happenstance, career construction, and self-authorship were explored and then crafted into a model that will serve as the foundation and lens for understanding meaning-making of chance work experiences.

CHAPTER 3. METHOD

This chapter includes a description of the overall conceptual framework, details of the research methods and design, the site of the study, a description of sampling and participant selection, and an introduction to the researcher. The researcher details strategies for data collection and analysis. The trustworthiness and credibility of the study, assumptions, and limitations are also discussed. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a brief summary.

Qualitative Inquiry

A qualitative research design was selected for this study to understand how Latinx students employed in at least one semester of an on-campus Federal Work-Study position made meaning of their employment experience. Qualitative research is conducted to explore and understand a phenomenon, to empower others, to understand the context of a problem, provide further detail, to write in a flexible style that conveys stories, or develop new theories (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Stake (2010) stated, "Humans are the researchers. Humans are being studied. Humans are the interpreters, among them the readers of our reports" (p.36). Qualitative research is centered around understanding a phenomenon, so developing holistic accounts of participants perspectives in natural settings followed by rich descriptions is important (Stake, 2010). It also draws on the views and interpretations of the researcher who is the key instrument (Stake, 2010; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Since this study is focused on meaning-making, a qualitative approach would emphasize the particular experiences of the study participants instead of providing a macrointerpretation (Stake, 2010). To understand a problem or issue to be explored, there are five qualitative approaches to inquiry: (1) narrative research, (2) phenomenological research, (3) grounded theory, (4) ethnography, and (5) case study. For this study, a case study research design seemed the best fit to address the research question to examine social phenomena.

Case Study Design

The goal of the study was to understand the unique FWS experiences of Latinx students with each study participant serving as the "case" to be studied and the focus of inquiry. Stake (2003) wrote that case studies have become a popular form of qualitative inquiry and are defined by the researchers' interest in individual cases. Case studies are all-encompassing, holistic, and richly descriptive through intense analyses (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). Yin (2018) defined the features of a case study by explaining that a case study "investigates a contemporary phenomenon ("the case") in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (p.15). A case study involves theory to guide design and data collection and uses multiple sources of evidence (e.g. documents, archival records, interviews, observations, and physical artifacts) to enhance the depth of the study.

For the purpose of this study, a multiple-case study design was used instead of a single-case study. This type of collective case design "is used to understand a theory or problem by combining information from individual cases" (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). Yin (2018) considered multiple-case studies as one considers multiple experiments as the cases should follow a replication design either predicting similar or contrasting results. Multiple-case study research is best used when the collection of cases has a common link or characteristic. Stake (2006) defined the collection of cases or examples of a phenomenon as a "quintain" meaning "the arena or holding company or umbrella for the cases we will study" (p.6). With the binding concept of the study being meaning-making of FWS experiences for Latinx students enrolled at an HSI, a multiple-case study design fit best to showcase the variety of student experiences in different work study placements.

Site of Study

To protect the identity of all participants involved in the study, a pseudonym was given to the selected study site and each work-study placement site. Located in the southeastern area of the United States, South Urban University (SUU) was a large, four-year, public university. More than 37,000 undergraduate students were enrolled at SUU. Of that total population, more female students than male students were enrolled at the time of this study, and the average age of students was 23 years old. SUU offered more than 100 majors and minors to study, but a large majority of the undergraduate population studied liberal arts and social sciences. In addition, most students were in-state residents and only 15% of students lived on campus. SUU was also one of 115 universities listed as Tier One status for their research activity and was known as the flagship within the SUU system.

The campus was located in a large, urban city in the state. The institution had nationwide recognition for its diverse student population and its' commitment to diversity and inclusion. SUU was designated in 2012 as an HSI by the DOE. When the study was conducted, 31 % of the total student population identified as Hispanic. SUU was selected for this study because of their unique process for work-study placement and for their diverse student population. As reviewed in the literature, many studies did not focus on students of color and their experiences with campus employment. By conducting this study at SUU, the site provided new insight into these student experiences, specifically students who identified as Latinx.

Selection and exclusion criteria. For the 2019-2020 academic year, 508 students were listed as active in a work-study position for the main campus according to SUU Human Resources. More than 25% of these students identified as Hispanic. At SUU, the FAO and career services staff worked in tandem to provide students with work-study opportunities. The Financial

Aid Office distributed work-study awards to students based on financial need. Under either the Federal College Work-Study Program or the college work-study program subsidized by the state, students could work up to 20 hours per week during the academic year. Students could not exceed eight hours of work per day and could not be paid overtime. According to the website handbook, to be eligible for work-study, the student must be admitted to the university, show financial need through the FAFSA application, be a citizen of the United States, and be enrolled at least part-time with satisfactory academic standing.

To apply, students must accept their award online through their university account and then are directed to create an account to access job postings through the SUU Career Services portal. Then students can select the type of work experience they would like to have. In the portal, students have access to apply to eligible on-campus roles from nearly 100 departments or off-campus and community service-based roles such as tutoring.

In addition, SUU Career Services and the Financial Aid Office hosted mandatory training workshops for all employers on the steps to hire a SUU student and how to post positions within the career services job portal. Separate training was provided for on-campus employers and off-campus employers. Training sessions are held during the summer where employers discuss updates to the work-study program and share methods for how to enhance student experiences in an open forum. Employers are also encouraged to provide feedback to the Financial Aid Office on the performance of the student via a performance evaluation. In this survey, students are evaluated in a variety of areas such as job knowledge, productivity, ability to learn, quality of work, and relations with others. This evaluation is shared and discussed between the immediate supervisor and the student.

Research Question

My aim for this study was to explore how Latinx students employed in at least one semester of an on-campus Federal Work-study position made meaning of their employment experience. The following research question was developed to guide the study: How do Latinx students connect on-campus work-study experiences to employability? As a career counselor, I wondered how these happenstance or planned happenstance experiences influenced Latinx student career development. I sought to understand what meaning students derived from these positions in terms of their professional identity, skillsets, values, and interests. Additionally, I wanted to know, based on the outcomes of their responses, if there was any room for growth in these placements and how student affairs administrators might improve the program.

Significance of the Study

By the year 2050, it was estimated that the Hispanic population in the U.S. would more than double (Flink, 2018). The U.S. DOE and the National Center for Education Statistics highlighted that enrollments of school-age Hispanic children increased from 16 to 25 % between 2000 and 2017 (de Brey et al., 2019). This population typically faces many barriers when it comes to college access and career readiness. Universities should be ready and equipped to ensure this specific population has the tools to be prepared for the world of work after graduation. For students that participate in the work-study program that identify as Latinx, the work experience could serve as a significant opportunity to develop or enhance career competencies.

Compared to the other campus-based or need-based aid programs funded by the Federal Government, the FWS program is the smallest. On average, four-year public institutions place 181 students in an on-campus work study placement (Federal Student Aid, 2017 – 2018).

However, what distinguishes work-study placement from other programs is the combination of both the provision of aid and work experience, which can be beneficial for students to have as they enter the workforce. FWS is a small program with potential for significant impact.

The FWS program has the potential to shape the skills students gain while on campus as well as students' interests and values as they seek future employment. As previously stated, reports on the FWS program have not offered much insight to specific students' stories especially by ethnic or racial identity. This study is significant because it provided another lens to understand student employment experiences, especially for Latinx students; and it also exposed how students make meaning of work-study.

Sampling and Participant Selection

Stake (2006) and Yin (2018) explained that while a solitary case study may not have as strong an effect as a multicase study, there is no definite number for how many cases should be included in a multicase study. Stake (2006) wrote that some multicase studies have fewer than 4, more than 15 cases, or even 30 cases depending on the type of study. Therefore, I sought to develop at least five or more cases to follow a replication design. For this study, six separate cases were developed and analyzed.

A purposeful sampling approach may be used for a qualitative study to provide a tailored sample (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Stake, 2006). Purposeful sampling means "that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon of the study" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.157). As for the type of purposeful sampling, I chose snowball sampling as my sampling strategy. Through snowball or chain sampling, the researcher identifies cases of interest through networking with individuals who are knowledgeable about the phenomenon or area of study

(Spickard, 2017). Gatekeepers are typically those in a position of authority who can connect researchers or serve as a bridge to gaining study participants (Spickard, 2017). Since SUU Career Services managed work-study opportunities and placements, this department served as the best network to gain access to participants and recommendations for specific students who would meet the participation criteria for the study. For the participant criteria, participants were:

1) undergraduate students who identify as Latinx or Hispanic
2) are enrolled at least part-time at SUU
3) are currently in an on-campus work-study position and have at least one semester of work experience in an on-campus work-study

As shown in Table 3.1, the demographic characteristics of each participant are indicated. This study was bound by definition and context. The cases that were examined all consisted of Latinx student employees bound within the context of work-study at SUU.

Table 3.1

Participant Demographics

Participant	Gender Identity	Age	Country/Countries of Ethnic Origin	Classification	Enrollment
Emily	Female	23	Mexico	Senior	Full-Time
DJ	Female	21	Puerto Rico /Ecuador	Senior	Part-Time
Astrid	Female	21	Mexico/Vietnam	Senior	Part-Time
Kara	Female	20	Mexico	Junior	Full-Time
Maria	Female	19	Mexico	Freshman	Full-Time
Sophia	Female	19	Guatemala / El Salvador	Freshman	Part-Time

Since students at SUU also have access to awards through their state for work-study, a work-study student was defined as a student who had a least one semester of work experience in an on-campus job funded solely by the Federal Work-Study program.

After collaborating with the director of SUU Career Services and SUU Human Resources, I identified 136 students who met the research criteria. The SUU Career Services director sent a targeted email on the researcher's behalf to these select students requesting that they participate in the study. The recruitment email described the purpose of the research, incentives, and included a link to the demographic survey created through Qualtrics. Of that 136, 13 students responded to the email, consented to the study, and completed the Qualtrics survey. Nine students indicated that they would be interested in participating in the in-person interview to receive a $15 dollar Amazon Gift Card. The participant sample selected to be included in the study was based on the research criteria and diversity of work-study placement experiences. The majority of the survey respondents identified as female and ranged in their classification statuses: three freshman students, one sophomore, four juniors, and five seniors. Most respondents stated that had held an on-campus work-study position for a semester or longer. Also, most students indicated that they work at least 15 to 20 hours per week at their designated work-study placement. In addition, for the competency ranking portion of the survey, respondents provided favorable reviews of their personal skillset by either stating they believed themselves to be either "Proficient" or "Very proficient" in most competency areas. Areas that students ranked themselves as "Somewhat Proficient" included critical thinking/problem solving, digital technology, leadership, and career management. Only one student stated that they were "Not Proficient" in the global/intercultural fluency competency.

After reviewing all survey responses, I reached out to students who were interested in interviews via email and by text message. I scheduled eight interviews with students. After meeting with each student, I recognized that two students filled out the survey form incorrectly: one student was actually receiving her post-baccalaureate degree from SUU and another student

was employed by work-study but the position was an off-campus role. This student was the only male that consented to the study. Based on this information, I decided to not include these student perspectives as they did not meet the established research criteria.

Contrarily, two other students (Sophia and Maria) were selected for participation even though they were freshman. Since both students were nearing the end of their first semester at SUU at the time of the interview, I felt that they met the baseline of the established criteria and had a least a semester of work experience to reflect on. Therefore, I decided to move forward with six undergraduate Latinx students who fully met the research criteria, had consented to the study and interview, and had varied classifications and backgrounds that would lend well to a multiple case study.

Data Collection

Before conducting the study, I sought approval from the Institutional Review Board at Louisiana State University and was granted permission from SUU Career Services to contact current work-study employees. SUU did not require IRB approval for an outside investigator. Yin (2018) wrote that "a good case study will therefore want to rely on as many sources as possible" (p. 113). Therefore, the sources of evidence used for this study included interviews, documentation, written artifacts, and archival records. I drafted an introductory e-mail to students with information explaining the overall study and a link to a demographic survey with an embedded consent form. Through collaboration with the director of SUU Career Services, the email was distributed to current Latinx students in on-campus work-study positions.

The demographic survey was created via Qualtrics and served as a screening tool to ensure interested students met the participant criteria. The survey was used to provide background information about the participants such as their age, sex, major, country of origin,

etc. The email also detailed the rewards for participating in the study as participants would each receive a $15 Amazon Gift Card.

Following interviews and transcription, I obtained 5 participant resumes via email to further understand the participants' background and work experience. One student did not submit their resume but was one of the longer in-person interviews. Yin (2018) asserted, "For case study research, the most important use of documentation is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (p.115). This form of documentation aided in contextualizing their work experience both past and present. It also served as an artifact for how students described their skills and job responsibilities. In addition to these documents, presentation slides from the summer employer training workshop hosted by SUU Career Services and Financial Aid Office, the current work-study handbook, and a sample performance evaluation survey were obtained to understand logistics of the work-study process at SUU and the employer perspective. The researcher also browsed the university department websites for each work-study placement to learn more about the mission and focus of each department. These documents were reviewed to gain a greater understanding of the overall work-study process at SUU.

Once the participants were narrowed down to students who met the participant criteria and seemed the best fit for the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted on the SUU campus. According to Hancock and Algozzine (2017), "semistructured interviews invite interviewees to express themselves openly and freely and to define the work from their own perspectives, not solely from the perspective of the researcher" (p.47). Open-ended questions built for the interview protocol guided the conversation. Baxter Magolda and King (2007) suggested that the concept of self-authorship may be applied during the interview. This means that the researcher provides space for the construction of meaning through active listening and

broad questions. A self-authorship interview is built on rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee as they share in reflections on an experience. I applied the concept of the self-authorship interview to each in-person interview with students. Baxter Magolda and King (2007) suggested that the "interviewer must occasionally refine or reframe questions that have yielded superficial responses to assess whether the interviewee will produce more substantive responses" (p.499).

Each interview lasted between 25 to 45 minutes and was conducted in the evening in reserved meeting rooms at the SUU Student Union before the Thanksgiving holiday break. These meeting locations were agreed upon between the interviewer and the participant. Participants were informed and reminded at the start of the interview of their right to withdraw from the study at any time, the purpose of the study, and that the discussion would be recorded to ensure the conversation was captured correctly. The researcher also asked preliminary questions before diving into the questions listed in the interview protocol about each student's background, identity, and their time at SUU. Through these preliminary questions, the interviewer hoped to achieve some rapport with the student and open space for more dialogue and substantive responses to later questions. Memos were written during interviews on a small notepad to take note of any noticeable participant behavior or nuances in the discussion that could add to their meaning-making. This researcher written artifact was useful to reflect on each interview and interaction with each participant. Pseudonyms were given to protect the identity of each interviewee.

Data Analysis

Qualitative inquiry involves "the use of interpretive/theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social

or human problem" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.42). Wahyuni (2012) explained that interpretivists believe in a flexible social reality of multiple perspectives instead of one absolute truth. Interpretivist researchers seek to understand the meaning participants attach to experiences through dialogue. An interpretive researcher seeks to grasp human meaning and make sense of a certain phenomenon. They view the data through a holistic lens and attempt to analyze the data in a neutral and unbiased manner to make sense of the phenomena (Morrison, 2012).

Interpretivism not only played a role in my sampling strategy in selecting a specific study site and cases based on my research question, but it was also utilized in that I analyzed the data through an interpretivist lens. The documents, archival records, and in-person interviews produced rich data to gain a holistic understanding of the case and student experience at their work-study placement. Content pulled from memos taken from each interview also provided insight into students' mannerisms, attitudes, and reactions as they reflected on and responded to questions about their experience. In analyzing the data, I considered that the participant's responses and experiences are their reality.

Creswell and Poth (2018) explain that the process for analyzing data in qualitative research "consists of preparing and organizing the data (i.e., text data as in transcripts, or image data as in photographs) for analysis; then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes…" (p.183). As data collection was completed, I created 6 separate digital files, labeled by each participant pseudonym, for each case and document collected.

I analyzed the data by first transcribing each participant interview. To streamline the transcription process, each voice recording was uploaded and transcribed using Rev. The Rev platform uses speech recognition technology which transformed audio speech into text

transcription. The interface was also used to then manually review and edit each Rev file. Once the software transformed the audio to text, I then actively engaged with the text and familiarized myself with the data by listening to the audio recording and manually editing the text. This process helped to ensure the accuracy of the total transcription and to review what was stated by each participant. In using Rev, I made sure to only label the recording by using the student pseudonyms. No identifying information was used by using this platform and recordings were removed from the website following the transcription process.

I then coded the raw data of the individual cases using Atlas.ti. The process began with first cycle coding utilizing steps as outlined by Miles et al. (2020). The coding approach involved a combination of In Vivo, descriptive, and process coding. The final list of codes were defined and formed the codebook which included, "the name for the code, description of the code defining boundaries through use of inclusion and exclusion criteria, and examples of the code using data from the study to illustrate" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 190). This process was followed by second cycle coding or pattern coding, which grouped the emergent codes into smaller categories and themes. Pattern coding was an essential part of the analysis because "for multiple case studies, it lays the groundwork for cross-case analysis by surfacing common themes and directional processes" (Miles et al., 2020, p. 79). Using the Atlas.ti software, the researcher grouped network of codes into a matrix display to then establish the within-case themes. After developing a detailed description of each case, an additional matrix display via Excel was developed to show the similarities and differences across the within-case themes.

Cross-case Analysis

For multiple-case study designs, a cross-case synthesis technique is commonly used (Stake; 2006; Yin, 2018). To best understand the quintain of the cases, I explored the within-case

patterns that emerged from the collected data. A case-based approach with a replication strategy was used to examine and compare patterns across the cases (Yin, 2018). Twenty-one within-case themes were developed from all six cases. According to (Miles et al., 2020), "Many researchers approach cross-case comparison by forming types of families. You inspect cases in a set to see whether they fall into clusters or groups that share certain patterns or configurations" (p. 96). These themes were organized into an Excel spreadsheet and the researcher reviewed each theme by considering both the central research question and the conceptual theoretical framework. From this analysis, the researcher drew cross-case conclusions and three cross-case themes emerged which formed the overall findings of the study.

Trustworthiness and Credibility

Creswell and Poth (2018) explained that rigor is a critical component of qualitative research where the researcher should corroborate the accuracy of the study through methods such as triangulation and member checking. Yin (2018) developed principles for data collection that help to ensure the validity and reliability of the evidence within the study. The first principle involved utilizing multiple sources of data to provide more depth and insight into the phenomenon being studied. Therefore, the use of documentation, researcher written artifacts, and open-ended interviews enhanced the overall case study findings. Triangulation created rich, thick descriptions of the case itself through multiple sources of data. This triangulation of data allowed the researcher to review the evidence together as another measure to support the overall finding. Yin (2018) wrote, "By developing convergent evidence, data triangulation helps to strengthen the construct validity of your case study" (p.128).

The second principle that the researcher applied focused on developing a case study database to organize and document the data. For this study, I developed an annotated

bibliography of all documents collected that were relevant to the case study and stored them in a file folder alongside all the separate digital case files that were developed.

Member checking by seeking participant feedback is another strong validation strategy that was used for this study to also establish credibility. Study participants were asked to review the interview transcription to ensure I captured the conversation correctly and accurately. Their critical observation ensured that their experience is well represented (Creswell & Poth, 2018). All six participants responded to the email asking them to review the attached transcript of their interview and stated that they thought the transcription was accurate. For example, Maria wrote, "Hi! I read the transcription and it seems accurate to what I said! Thank you for the opportunity to participate."

About the Researcher

Allan et al. (2017) found that students' desire meaningful work in their future careers and that this is an important value. For more than three years, I have served as a career coach at both a public and private university and have had the opportunity to work with many different populations of students. I enjoyed this work because I could provide students with various tools and strategies to assist them during their job search or pursuit of a graduate degree. I empowered students and alumni to take hold of their career development and to think critically about the skills they developed during their college experience. As a graduate assistant, I supervised students employed through work-study. I found I did not feel fully equipped to provide them with what I now believe could have been a more meaningful experience, nor did I understand best practices to challenge these students and help them recognize opportunities for skill growth.

As Ghant et al. (2016) wrote, "Institutions of higher education are called upon to promote students' skills (e.g. communication and reasoning skills) beyond the discipline" (p.211). Many

times, I have met with students during a career center appointment who neglected to acknowledge relevant work experience including their on-campus positions. Students appeared to not think critically about how their on-campus roles may have influenced their skillset. Oftentimes, students forgot to include these roles in their resume altogether. It was also common for students to express their fears, concerns, and doubts about their own abilities or their capacity to be successful post-graduation.

My studies through both my masters and doctoral program prompted me to reflect on my own identity and privilege as I made efforts to connect more with my Belizean heritage and "Afro-Latina" identity. I felt that the term best aligned with the Central American culture and diverse racial makeup of Belize. As an undergraduate student, I found community on campus through student organizations and events centered on Latin heritage and culture. As a professional, I desired to support students of color, especially for students with a Hispanic/Latinx identity to create spaces where they felt welcomed and acknowledged in their career development.

I had a personal interest to help students understand their skillset and unique attributes through my role as a career counselor by guiding, mentoring, and advising students in their job search. For these reasons, I was inspired to focus my research on outcomes of the FWS program and specifically explore Latinx student perspectives on how they make meaning of their on-campus work-study experiences.

According to Yin (2018), "Avoiding bias is but one facet of a broader set of values that falls under the rubric of 'research ethics'" (p. 87). As the researcher, it was important to understand one's biases, orientations, and experiences that can be brought into the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Coming from a middle-class family with two supportive, college-

educated parents, I possessed both high social and college readiness capital that propelled me along my academic journey. My parents and mentors exposed me to different opportunities and encouraged me to take advantage of various experiences that have now aided me in my career. Some of those experiences included part-time on-campus roles at a local coffee shop, as an undergraduate researcher, and as a resident assistant for a campus residential hall. However, since I was not eligible for work-study, I sought out these opportunities for additional income and to engage with the campus community. Throughout my graduate studies, I have recognized the differences in my college access journey to students who may not have had the same supports or resources as I did. Since I worked in career services, identified as an Afro-Latina due to my Belizean heritage, and personally did not participate in the FWS program, I had to remain aware of any preconceptions and orientations I may have for the study.

Assumptions

First, it was hoped that during in-person interviews, participants felt open and comfortable enough to share their stories for how they made meaning of their work experience. The researcher made efforts to build rapport with each participant before beginning the interview questions. This was achieved by asking preliminary questions about their background, family upbringing, and high school experiences before entering the college setting. Second, it was assumed that each student had worked for a long enough time to have developed a substantial understanding of their experience upon which to reflect. By working on campus for at least one semester, the students may have gained enough experiences to be able to reflect and make meaning on what they have done thus far. Lastly, it was also a hope that participants took what has been discussed concerning their work experience and occupational goals and continued to grow in their employability skills to prepare for their job search following graduation.

Limitations

There are a few limitations to this study to be addressed. This study only focused on the impacts of the FWS program. The students with state-funded work-study at SUU were not reflected in this study. In addition, I sought to understand the experiences of Latinx undergraduate students through interviews, documentation, and artifacts. Additional interviews or observations of supervisors may have provided a different perspective, but their experiences were not the focus of this study. Also, the study was conducted at SUU – one large, public institution located in the Southeast. While there are nearly 500 HSI's in the United States, the results of this study are limited to the perspectives of students at SUU alone, which is another limitation to broadening understandings of Latinx student experiences. Lastly, of the 136 students who were sent the recruitment email, only 13 responded to the email and consented to the study. The majority of these students were female. Therefore, the study did lack in diversity by gender.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the collective case study design and rationale behind the use of qualitative methods were discussed. I also outlined the design including the site of the study, the desired sample, and the process for data collection and analysis. As the case study researcher, I acknowledged my background and past experiences to clarify any biases or values I have that may shape my interpretation of the study. Assumptions and limitations for the study were also addressed. In chapter four, I discuss the results of the study.

CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS OF DATA AND FINDINGS

This chapter details the results of data collected through individual case analysis and reports. The case analysis is comprised of the six stories of each student interviewed for the study: Emily, DJ, Astrid, Kara, Maria, and Sophia. Each student's case is structured around an overview of the participant's experiences in her work-study position. Following this content, themes are then presented and discussed. As previously mentioned for the approach to multiple case study analysis, each individual case report was developed before drawing cross-case conclusions. A final cross-case report and results are addressed in Chapter 5.

Table 4.1

Work-Study Sites and Identified Participant Career Goals

Participant	Major	Minor	Work-Study Placement Sites	Identified Career Goal
Emily	Marketing	none	SUU Disability Services	Human Resources
DJ	Psychology	Spanish for Global Professions	SUU Financial Aid Admissions Office The Eye Center	Healthcare (Psychiatrist)
Astrid	Art	Education	SUU Disability Services	Education (Art Teacher)
Kara	Geology	none	SUU College of Architecture	Environmental Consulting
Maria	Psychology	none	College of Liberal Arts Dean's Office	Healthcare (Pediatrician)
Sophia	Political Science	Spanish	SUU Career Services	Law

Note. Pseudonyms were given to work-study placement sites in order to maintain student anonymity.

Emily: "I Can Do It by Myself"

At the time of our interview, Emily was a 23-year-old senior at SUU anticipating graduating in December 2019 with degrees in both Marketing and Human Resource

Management. She identified as Mexican and grew up in the same city as SUU with a 20-minute commute from her family home to the university's main campus. Emily was no stranger to working. Whether by babysitting on weekends or through her campus work-study position, Emily sought out several ways to cover additional costs during her college experience. Emily planned to pursue a graduate degree in human resources or a closely related field following graduation.

Emily's high school experiences first sparked her interest in pursuing marketing. She enjoyed the research, analysis, and creativity involved in marketing. Later exposure to other classes encouraged her to explore the field of Human Resources. Through a friend, Emily learned of what she described as an "exclusive volunteering opportunity" at a local hospital and decided to apply her junior year:

> I really found out that I like the process of onboarding people… meeting all these new people and calling them and [saying], "You got hired. You're gonna get the job and stuff." And then I started volunteering at the [hospital] as the volunteer for the HR department, and I realized that, "Oh I really like this."

Emily waited for six months as the hospital processed her before she became an official volunteer. She rotated through various departments of the hospital before landing in human resources and gaining exposure to the field. Emily continued volunteering through her senior year in addition to other extracurricular activities. For her on-campus involvement, Emily was a member of the Society for Human Resources (SHRM) for two semesters to expand her network outside of volunteering and the classroom setting and to further explore the human resources industry. Emily noted the importance of networking for finding opportunity in human resources:

> That's what I've noticed about HR. It's a lot of … policies and how different HR departments work in different industries, so…that's something that I really had to figure out how to network and find people that were in HR. So, that's why I joined SHRM… I like the networking events that they have and the companies that come out and the professionals … If you reach out to them, talk to them, ask them questions or advice, they

> give pretty good advice … 'cause I reached out to a lady that I met there that did her masters in HR… She gave me an insight about the program and her personal experience about it and everything, and that really helped me [think], "Oh, it's actually a pretty good program because she has a pretty good job."

Before joining the work-study program, Emily was employed off-campus during both her freshman and sophomore years of college. Emily interned for a local nonprofit and then worked her way up to an administrative assistant role. There, she organized projects and records and collaborated with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide funding for individuals in need of affordable housing or relocation assistance. While she enjoyed the administrative assistant role at the facility where she was employed, the hours and workload became too much for Emily to balance with her schoolwork. On average, Emily worked from 25 to 35 hours per week at that job while being enrolled in school full time before applying to work-study.

Including summers, Emily had extensive experience with on-campus work-study, as she was in her third semester of work-study at SUU at the time of our interview. Emily desired to avoid any type of student debt following graduation, so this was her primary motivation for working throughout her college experience. She was concerned about graduating from college with any kind of debt; she wanted to ensure that she could avoid loans, so the additional funds from the FWS program met other needs like car maintenance, insurance, groceries, and other miscellaneous purchases for school.

Emily worked for both the SUU Disability Services and the SUU Financial Aid Office. Emily applied for these positions using SUU's Career Service job board. Emily expressed frustration with securing opportunities on campus that she truly desired because it seemed that students who already lived on campus had a better advantage:

> So…that's what I've noticed. If you live on campus, it's pretty easy to get a job and stuff because your availability is … you're always here, so I feel that's the thing that came into play 'cause for me, it took me maybe two to three weeks to get a job here compared to my friends that lived here. They were like, "Oh, they already called us for an interview and then we start a week later." So, it took me a while to get a job here compared to my friends that lived here.

In both offices, Emily held an administrative role. She had various responsibilities such as working at the front desk, filing documents, or checking student accounts. Each position kept Emily busy. She recounted how she wanted more student workers working alongside her at each office. Emily said that with additional help, she could better manage phone calls or the front desk, which she said was always busy. While Emily did not enjoy filing, organizational tasks, and resolving student conflicts, she enjoyed greeting students and building connections with anyone who entered the office space:

> You got to see some that would graduate and then new students that would come in and sign up for disability, so there were a lot of recurring faces coming in, and also people would leave and graduate, and you would be happy for them because a lot of the kids that had disabilities and everything you would [think], "Oh my god, it's super challenging for them." It's already challenging for a normal person, so it was really exciting when we saw people graduate. Well, for me it was. And then the new students and everything… I also like just meeting new people and being like, "Oh yeah, we have a new student today!"

Emily considered herself to be naturally introverted, so the opportunity to talk to strangers and engage with them improved her communication ability to the point where she was comfortable starting a conversation with someone new. Emily found her supervisors and team members at both departments pleasant and easy to work with. She thought her supervisors were very flexible and understanding when it came to her need to prioritize her studies or other commitments outside of her job. At SUU Disability Services, Emily was trained by a peer who guided her through the work process and educated her on different work procedures. The Financial Aid Office training was different and involved online modules that Emily did not find to be effective

training due to the length of time to complete the training and the immense amount of information that she needed to learn. The bulk of Emily's meaningful interactions at the workplace have been with her peers and by making friends on the job. Student co-workers she never anticipated becoming close to due to age difference and background became close friends of hers.

As Emily reflected on the different skills she gained through working on campus, she first mentioned the idea that she became more open to both new opportunities and meeting people. She said she would like to improve her presentation skills beyond only having presentation experience in the classroom. She also felt more organized and focused on her schoolwork because she had to learn how to balance her work-study schedule with other responsibilities. Through her undergraduate experience, Emily learned that she should believe in herself more:

> …I can actually do it. That I can do it by myself. 'Cause most of my undergrad, I literally had a boyfriend and we pushed each other a lot and everything, but then we broke up before senior year started, so … I felt so lost and everything, and I was like, "Wow, what now?" And I was, "Oh, I don't think I can do this by myself," but I realized I can do everything by myself. I don't need someone pushing me and nothing. So, I really realized that I just want different things in life too… I realized I want other things that I never realized I wanted in my life like grad school and everything.

Motivations to Work

A few times during the interview process, Emily mentioned her distance from campus and described how that might have inhibited her ability to secure the work opportunities that she initially wanted to apply to. She also advocated for other students who commute to campus and have difficulty obtaining a position. She said she heard these students would usually end up on a waiting list for work-study positions. Living 20 minutes away from the SUU Main Campus, Emily believed that she started at a disadvantage compared to her peers who had quicker access

to interviewing for positions. However, her need for additional income and desire to work outweighed the added hurdle of commuting to campus.

Emily desired to leave college with little to no student debt and had various expenses that she had to cover. Finances were the primary factor for securing employment throughout her college career. Emily realized that working off-campus would not allow her the flexibility to focus on her schoolwork as much as she wanted to, especially as the rigor of her courses began to grow. Flexibility was a motivator for Emily to pursue a work-study role. Therefore, securing an opportunity that was flexible and manageable around her schedule and distance from home also made working on campus an appealing option.

Individual Skills

Emily mentioned a variety of skills that she believed she developed during her on-campus work-study experiences. Emily's role as a student worker encouraged her to enhance her organization skills by ensuring she was organized both at work and at school to manage her course load. Many times, Emily referenced communication as a skillset she developed through her work-study experience. Both work-study roles placed her in spaces that required constant communication; she worked outside her comfort zone to communicate with students in order to meet their needs. She also discovered how to manage conflicts in the workplace and deal with upset students. Through this experience, Emily learned how to be patient and more mindful of how to communicate to ensure she provided quality customer service.

Emily realized the importance of effective communication in her future career as it was something she would continue to use when assisting clients in human resources and marketing. Also, Emily recognized that honing strong presentation skills would be beneficial with a career in human resources. As she reflected, Emily stated that she felt more confident in her overall

abilities since arriving at SUU during her freshman year. She felt capable and equipped to explore and pursue her interests. She no longer felt the need to rely on the viewpoints of others and believed that she could figure things out on her own, especially related to her career pursuits.

Personal Career Development

Emily's interest in marketing first stemmed from involvement in a marketing and art student club at her high school, and she continued to seek opportunities where she could gain more exposure to the world of work. She found these opportunities through volunteering, networking, and professional student organizations. Emily found it important to not only gain work experience but also cultivate experiences outside the workplace that would connect more to her interest areas of marketing and human resources. Emily supplemented these gaps in her work-study employment through outside exposure.

Volunteering allowed Emily to see firsthand what human resources looked like in a work setting. She then built on that exposure through networking in her student organization, where she conducted an informational interview with a professional to gain more answers about options for graduate school. This interaction gave her more clarity on the possibility of furthering her education at one local private institution that she was considering based on the professional's firsthand knowledge and experience. Emily valued this form of connection as a type of mentorship and guidance that would assist her in moving forward in the next steps of her career journey.

Relationship Building

The additional benefits of work-study indicated by Emily included the relationships with her supervisors and friendships with coworkers, which made both jobs in Financial Aid and Disability Services positive experiences. By being trained by her peers, Emily believed she

learned the work effectively and was able to make connections with her coworkers better. Emily found it easy to ask these students for help when needed. She also built unexpected friendships at her work-study placement.

Emily described her supervisors as kind, patient, and understanding. She appreciated the support her supervisors provided with keeping her academic performance as a top priority. She also found that her supervisors pushed her to grow professionally by encouraging her to communicate more with students and attempt to deal with conflicts on her own. Although challenging, Emily found this type of support to be beneficial in helping her overcome her shy and introverted tendencies.

DJ: "I Have To Provide For Myself"

DJ was passionate about making a positive impact in her community because of the different struggles she faced concerning her mental health and well-being. After visiting different therapists, DJ felt she did not get the assistance and therapy she really needed. Therefore, DJ decided to study psychology at SUU and planned to apply to graduate school. She expressed that her ultimate goal is to become a psychiatrist to provide a better counseling and therapy experience for others.

The 21-year-old senior transferred to SUU from community college and decided to live on campus. DJ had jobs both on and off-campus since 2017. Her off-campus position was as a cashier for a local restaurant where she worked on a seasonal basis until 2019. Her on-campus work included two different work-study positions: one as an optometric assistant and one previously as an admissions assistant. Each role was customer service focused and involved administrative tasks. As an optometric assistant, DJ's responsibilities included sorting glasses, keeping track of patient orders, and handling pricing. With the Admissions Office, she said her

job involved responding to student emails and answering questions. Of the two positions, DJ said she did not enjoy the role with the Admissions Office and found it boring. She felt she did not have much work to do to fulfill her 20 hours a week commitment.

When asked why she pursued these positions, DJ said she attempted to find positions related to her major but was not successful in finding one:

> Well, my main reason, it was just I need money… I provide for myself to an extent [for] everything, like food… I live on campus as well … if I need anything, I have to provide for myself. So that's my main factor, I think the main reason… Honestly, I was just desperate for money, so whatever sounded like I could have been able to do.

Her seasonal off-campus role and on-campus role helped to support these needs along with her tuition and fees, as well as her sorority dues. DJ had been a member and student leader in a Panhellenic sorority at SUU's campus since 2017 and desired to maintain this involvement. DJ gained more confidence in her leadership ability during her work-study experience but recognized that this was still an area where she still wanted to grow:

> … It takes time for me to build confidence on something. The more I do it…the more practice, the better I get at it. And then to not be afraid to approach people when I need help. That's the main thing 'cause it's just, I don't know, I just get afraid.

DJ also stated that she preferred to work alone because she would rather depend on herself to get tasks completed but recognized that working in teams is an area that she wanted to develop.

Despite the repetitiveness of tasks, which would sometimes cause DJ to lose interest in her work, she enjoyed some aspects of her positions as a student worker. At the admissions office, she said she found it rewarding to answer student questions, especially those of transfer students, since she had similar challenges in navigating the admission process. As an optometric assistant, DJ found the work environment to be more positive due to the culture built by her direct supervisor and the staff. DJ appreciated the diversity in the workspace and that her supervisor was understanding of her school schedule. DJ had a good relationship with her

supervisor, found her approachable, and appreciated the trust her supervisor had in her to work independently and complete her tasks on time.

DJ's parents are from Puerto Rico and Ecuador, but DJ said she did not grow up "like your typical Hispanic." She struggled to figure out her Latina identity and what it means to be "Latina enough." DJ found it difficult to relate to students at SUU from other Latin American countries where typical dishes and even certain phrases or vocabulary in Spanish varied. However, DJ addressed the importance of Latinx representation in the workplace and its impact on her:

> My manager…she's very nice, and she's also Hispanic. I didn't expect a Hispanic to be holding that type of position 'cause I've only worked with managers who have been white or nothing… not a person of color… and most of the people that work [at the Eye Center] are also people of color. So that was something that amazed me … I really liked seeing that for a change.

Connection to Career

DJ aspired to have a career in mental health due to the influence of experiences both she and her siblings faced growing up. With that goal in mind, DJ expressed disappointment that her campus work-study positions were not related to her end goal; rather, she would prefer for her work-study positions to be related to her area of study. However, DJ revealed that she gained more confidence in herself through her work-study positions. DJ improved her leadership skills, which may prove valuable to her in the future. Her exposure to work-study did help DJ realize which career paths and work environments she would not enjoy. DJ's experience in admissions, while not as positive, helped her to reflect on her value set and the type of work environment she wanted in the future.

DJ realized that a career where she could explore her passions would be the best fit. Repetitive administrative roles or tasks bored DJ. She admitted that she desired a role where she

could interact more with different people from various backgrounds and beliefs. For her future career, even as a psychiatrist, DJ wanted a position where she genuinely loved the work.

Financial Stress

The stressors of managing finances and ensuring that she could provide for herself appeared to be the main motivations for DJ to work at all times of the year. DJ expressed that she tended to get stressed very easily. Balancing her schoolwork with outside work experience was difficult to manage. Work-study positions appeared to be the most optimal for her. With her many needs, including tuition, fees, sorority life, and other living expenses, DJ displayed a desire to be independent of her parents and family in order to take care of herself and meet her own needs. She did not mention in her interview that she relied on her parents financially. In fact, she revealed that she decided to live on campus to have a greater sense of independence and freedom that she would not have had living at home. However, that sense of independence seemed to come at a cost, where DJ worried about making sure she had enough income to both cover personal expenses and be successful in school.

Since money was the most significant factor, DJ accepted roles through which she would be able to support herself. Her role as a cashier in the fast food industry at local buffet during her time in community college before transferring to SUU provided additional income that she needed. She made efforts to supplement the gap in direct career connection with other opportunities, such as volunteering, membership in her school's psychology club, and sorority membership. DJ enjoyed her leadership role in her sorority and the fact that the opportunity allowed her to grow outside of her comfort zone and develop different skills outside the workplace. While she enjoyed her involvement, her natural introversion and the cost of maintaining sorority membership concerned her.

New Perspective

DJ's current role as an optometry assistant appeared to be the most impactful experience that she referenced. The position appeared to help her understand values that would be important to her moving forward in the workplace. DJ appreciated the diversity in the workspace since this was something she had not seen before – neither at her off-campus role as a cashier nor as an admissions assistant. The inclusive culture, both in terms of racial backgrounds and age diversity, seemed to appeal to her. DJ also appreciated how her supervisor respected and treated her in the workplace. Her supervisor's attentive, understanding, and trusting nature appealed to DJ and helped to make the work-study experience a positive one.

DJ gained new perspectives in terms of opportunities as a Latina. DJ observed her supervisor's career and financial well-being compared to other Hispanic women she had known, and this also impacted DJ by providing an example of a woman of color—a Hispanic woman—in a position of leadership. DJ was amazed to see a successful Latina and other persons of color in the roles they held at the office space. This exposure and interaction likely affirmed the possibility for future career and financial success for DJ. It may also have helped her feel confident in pursuing graduate school.

Astrid: Learning to "Say No"

Astrid was a senior at SUU majoring in Art with a minor in Education. She intended to work as an art teacher following graduation. Astrid said she always had a passion for art and design, and she would continue them professionally on the side, in addition to teaching. She was skilled in 2D drawing and painting and had experience with graphic design as well. She was 21-years-old. Astrid was raised in a multicultural household: her father was Vietnamese and her mother was Mexican. She expressed that having a mixed racial identity and experiencing the

blending of cultures was confusing at times, growing up with both Asian and Hispanic influences and values. She said her suburban neighborhood where she grew up was predominantly white, so her time at SUU provided a different dynamic; she witnessed how students who were not multiracial navigated their own Asian or Hispanic identity:

> … I grew up mixed, but I feel because [our parents] wanted us to kind of blend in a little bit more, they didn't push a lot of that onto us, so obviously I feel I do have a lot of a strong sense of family value and responsibility towards my family, but if there's some micro-cultural thing, they didn't push that onto us. If anything … when we go to other family gatherings where it's specifically the Vietnamese family or it's the Hispanic family, then that's where I kind of absorb those cultural aspects from, but anything else specifically in my house growing up, they never really pushed us to act a certain way or to grow up a certain way…

Astrid initially desired to enroll in an art school but chose SUU since she felt it was a cheaper option that could provide a similar experience to a private institution. While she was upset that she could not go to a school that solely specialized in art, Astrid said that new friendships, a relaxed environment, and the variety of classes helped her to enjoy her experience at SUU more than she expected. As a senior in her education program, Astrid was involved in student teaching or co-teaching, which she engaged in three days a week. She described this experience as an "unpaid internship," where she could gain classroom experience by working alongside a mentor teacher. She said that student teaching experience is meant to prepare her with the necessary exposure for teaching. Astrid performed her student teaching at a middle school in a suburban area located 30 minutes from SUU:

> I'm already in the classroom with students. I'm interacting with them. They know my name. They know what I do. They ask me all the time, "Oh, what do you do at college?" or you know…They're super cute [laughs]. I love them.

Astrid taught students who ranged in age from around 11 to 13 years old. Astrid revealed that student teaching and commuting takes up a great deal of time between managing classes and her current work-study position.

Astrid worked for the past two years as a student worker with SUU Disability Services. She said this role involved a lot of customer service and basic administrative tasks. Her responsibilities included keeping the front desk organized, scheduling student appointments with counselors, proctoring student exams, and delivering exams to faculty:

> Anyway… I mentioned we have testing centers, so if they need a distraction-reduced environment … if they go to testing centers…then sometimes there aren't a set time limit, and sometimes students, particularly if they have ADHD, if they need a little bit longer or students with anxiety…they might not be compatible with a testing center like that… At our testing center, they can take whatever time they need and things like that, but since they do test at the center, we have to deliver those exams back… It's a lot of ins and outs.

Astrid applied for the role utilizing the SUU career services job portal and looked for roles that were administrative or customer service focused since she believed her skills from previous jobs in high school would translate. Financial need was her main reason for seeking employment, but Astrid also mentioned other gaps that working on campus could fill:

> I missed working, I guess … My first year, I did not work. My freshman year, I was fully focused on classes. That was fine. I mean, my GPA's still high. I don't really think having to work affected it that much … but I found that I didn't have a lot of free time… I wasn't necessarily using it all for arts. I was like, "Okay, after my second year, I'll just get a work-study job," so I did.

Astrid said that SUU Disability Services was a "pretty healthy work environment" and that there was not much that she disliked about the position. However, the position posed challenges in that she had to focus on managing small details and staying organized. Astrid worked with sensitive information and strived to maintain confidentiality because of the student population that she served. At times, Astrid said her supervisor could be intimidating and challenging to work with at times due to misunderstandings or different communication styles, but Astrid has learned how to adapt:

> I think when I first started, I was a little more intimidated … When you're a little younger, and you don't want to step on anyone's toes, and you [say],"Oh, I'll be here for whatever you need" or "I'll do whatever you want" like kind of deal…but I've grown a

> little bit more of a backbone, so now, whenever she tells me to do things, I can say, "Wait a moment while I do this" or "I gotta do this first and can definitely get back to you, but you gotta give me a moment," so … having her be a little bit intimidating has kind of [chuckles] caused me I guess to grow a little bit more in telling when to tell her just to wait a moment and I guess adapting.

Astrid expressed that there are areas in the work environment that could be streamlined or would work better if more resources and forms could be managed with an electronic system. Currently, students who take tests in the testing center must submit a physical paper form by either walking it over or faxing it to the office. She said an electronic system could benefit the process, but the office may not have funding for this type of system. However, she said that between herself and her six other coworkers, it was intimidating and difficult to attempt to voice particular frustrations or provide suggestions. Other than this, Astrid expressed that she worked well with the other student workers in the office and said everyone is willing to help and provide office support when needed.

Astrid had to learn when and how to be firm with students. Astrid said that sometimes students would not take no for an answer, and it was difficult to be the bearer of unwelcome news. She said she was naturally a very empathetic and "mushy" person, so she sometimes opted to make exceptions for students to meet their needs. She admired a past staff member who could be firm yet supportive of student needs:

> …She handled it very well … having to be firm but also very, very understanding of the students and how to handle things really quickly and efficiently while also making sure the student was very involved in the process. That was something I really admired, and just the way that she had that aura around her that meant, "I know what I'm doing so you don't have to question me about it."

After two years in the role, Astrid said she formed a backbone when it came to dealing with students and faculty. She had no issue taking charge at the front desk, answering questions, and taking the lead when needed. Through this growth, Astrid was recognized by her supervisor:

> We used to have two part-time people…One of them would be for the morning, and one would be for closing, but recently, I think it was a year ago, one of the part-time people left. She was the person who trained me, and I looked up to her. So, she left, and before she left, when she gave in her notice, my supervisor had asked me to take over her position so… I felt like that was saying a lot about how much trust she had in me to take over someone's position like that. I couldn't take it simply because of the time constraint … I was still in school and I was still full-time, and part-time meant I would have to basically fulfill a certain amount of hours that I couldn't fulfill, so that's the only reason I turned it down, but I think that was really meaningful just knowing that my supervisor had that much trust in me to be like, "Yeah, I think that you could take over this position too … you'll fill in this person's shoes." 'Cause the person who left who works part-time. She was really good at her job … I felt having her say that to me like, "Oh, I feel that you can take over" …That meant a lot to me.

When asked about how she planned to achieve her goal of becoming a full-time art teacher, Astrid said:

> ... So, after the student teaching, I'm going to have to go to a job fair and I mean I have to get hired, and I have to get a job. I have to go into the real world. Hopefully, apply what I've learned in student teaching and my work-study job—professionalism and communication—to teaching these kids.

Diverse Benefits of Work-Study

Astrid sought her work-study position out of a financial need to support her academic pursuits and to have additional income. However, she also mentioned that she desired another experience that would help her fill her free time since she preferred to have a busy schedule. Work-study filled this need and provided a flexible work schedule that she could balance in addition to her coursework and her new student-teaching role.

Astrid reflected on her growth as a professional and the application of her skills to teaching. She had previous work experience in the foodservice industry before arriving to campus. She said this role provided her with some customer service, teamwork, and communication skills. However, Astrid expressed that although she "just works at the front desk," her role as a student worker had some connection to her career path as a budding teacher. Astrid said she enjoyed helping students. As a teacher, Astrid hoped to provide a fulfilling

experience for her students that would be more engaging than a simple lecture. Her delight in assisting students was displayed in her student worker role. She enjoyed communicating with students who came to the office and catered to their needs as much as she could.

Even though she did not accept the opportunity, Astrid was offered a full-time work opportunity from her supervisor. She said her supervisor believed that Astrid would be capable of taking on the leadership role and best support the office and other student staff. As Astrid reflected on the growth in her strengths, she found it meaningful that her supervisor recognized her growth and had developed a level of trust in Astrid as a student employee. Astrid revealed that this gesture meant a lot to her.

Commute to Campus

Astrid grew up in a suburban neighborhood and lived a far distance away from the SUU campus. She learned how to balance her coursework, student teaching, and work-study role with the distance, travel, and time involved. Astrid received support from her family, which allowed her to live at home and commute. She chose SUU, a local school, based on financial factors instead of deciding to enroll in a private art school, which from her perspective, would have been expensive and perhaps burdensome on her family. Astrid desired to support her family while at the same time pursuing her passions in art and education.

Astrid was a part-time senior student at SUU, so her course schedule was reduced to a minimum of 12 credit hours. Astrid expressed that she had a decent workload both at her work-study position and with student teaching. Between these commitments, Astrid managed to commute to and from campus. Astrid did not appear to view the commute as a negative experience, but just another factor of her life as a student. She described it as something that needed to be done to meet her goals.

Developing Professional Skills

Astrid believed that her work-study experience allowed her to develop skills that could benefit her as a future teacher. A common example that she repeated was the challenge of learning how to be assertive and firm by saying "no" when needed. Astrid said she naturally had a "soft" and empathetic personality. This made it initially difficult when interacting with students in the office for whom she was inclined to make more exceptions and accommodations based on their individual circumstances. Astrid disliked conflict and disagreements with students and faculty. However, Astrid said that with time and through observation of the behavior of professional staff, she developed confidence in this area. This adaptation to the work environment had been important to Astrid. As a teacher, Astrid said she would need to be firm with her students to manage her classroom better. In addition, Astrid mentioned leadership, communication, and organization as other skills that she further developed that she did not have the opportunity to develop through previous food service work experience. Her customer service skills helped her better serve the students with disabilities.

Kara: A "Friendly" Workspace

Kara was a 20-year-old junior studying Geology at SUU. She identified as Latina, and her family was from Mexico. Following graduation, Kara aspired to pursue a career in environmental consulting or to work in a government position where she could investigate whether companies adhered to environmental regulations. In high school, Kara participated in a local summer youth program that assisted with job placement and exposure to the world of work where she served as an ambassador for a local non-profit.

At the time of our interview, Kara was completing her first semester as a records assistant for the SUU College of Architecture. In her student worker role, Kara assisted with most of the

filing and organization of student records. She managed the front desk and communicated with students and parents, providing information about the college. She also answered phone calls and assisted staff with other miscellaneous office tasks as needed. Current students visited for advising appointments with counselors, while prospective students visited to tour the campus. Kara learned of the records assistant position with the College of Architecture by attending a career fair hosted by SUU Career Services. Kara found this role appealed to her not only because it offered the highest pay, but also because of the friendliness and warmth of the staff member who greeted her at the fair.

Kara looked to apply for an on-campus position that would provide her flexibility with her afternoon classes. Kara chose her own work schedule, which was a crucial factor allowing her to balance all her student involvement and her coursework. Kara became involved in a few student organizations, gained leadership roles, and engaged in on-campus research experiences during her sophomore year. For one organization, she became the social media manager; in this role, she was responsible for developing content and fliers to share with different audiences about upcoming events for her organization. She was heavily involved with these experiences outside of work.

Kara described the office culture and environment at the College of Architecture as positive and welcoming. She worked alongside one other student worker and had daily interaction with the college advisors and occasional interactions with the assistant dean:

> Oh, I feel like this is kind of silly, but the atmosphere … the office itself is very welcoming… They have art on the walls and architecture stuff on the walls and on display. And I think that helps a lot to make it feel relaxed. They have chairs. They have a giant, baseball glove chair in there. [laughs] And, it seems, it sounds tacky, but it actually looks nice in there for some reason there … They decorate their offices 'cause I guess 'cause they're advisors and they like having it welcoming too. Yeah…the doors are always open, so that's nice too.

Her supervisor provided initial one-on-one guidance and then allowed the students to practice their customer service at the desk while observing. In comparison to her previous work experience, Kara appreciated this style of training because it helped her to feel more confident and capable in her abilities by having immediate feedback and freedom to learn on her own.

She disliked having to assist disgruntled callers and had to learn how to manage and navigate these situations in a calm manner and refer to the established office protocol:

> Answering the phone is kind of annoying because a lot of times… there are parents who are concerned about their students' application and you have to kind of be patient with some of them … Some of them are impatient and want it … they'll get their answers right then and there, but I don't always have the answer for those. So our protocol is to get their email and stuff. We do get some people who … they want to speak to someone right then and there and we're not supposed to let them go through to someone else. So … it's kinda tough.

Kara noted that because the role was public-facing and communication focused, she said she enhanced her "people skills." When she first began the role, Kara stated that she was shy but over time, she has focused more on her customer service skills and speaking up more.

In the long-term, Kara planned to maintain her work-study employment based on the flexibility of the role. When asked what she learned about herself through working on- campus, Kara said:

> I've learned that I can take initiative … I don't know, I was very hesitant to do anything without clearing it with other people first. So it kind of made me more confident in what I'm doing … I know that I'm doing my job and I'm doing it right. So I think [my job] helps with that… and I've learned that I can talk to people in public … I also learned that I enjoy kind of helping people get what they need. I like being helpful basically.

Convenience

One aspect of the work-study experience that was repeatedly mentioned by Kara was the convenience factor of the position. Convenience made work-study an appealing option. It allowed her to stay on campus and balance work with the other opportunities she was committed

to at SUU in addition to her afternoon coursework. Since Kara became more involved on campus during her sophomore year, she needed work experience that would allow her to continue these experiences. While Kara stated that she planned on maintaining her work-study, she acknowledged that her long-term goal would be to pursue an experience more focused in her area of study and interest. She considered pursuing an internship in environmental consulting or assisting a professor in research on-campus. Therefore, work-study, while convenient, appeared to fulfill an area of need in terms of income and convenience but not necessarily with related experience.

Positive Workspace

Kara connected both office aesthetics and the staff to positive aspects of work culture, which were valuable to her and her work-study experience. Kara had previously worked at another office during the summer, so she had some exposure to the structure and characteristics of another work environment. The open, supportive, and welcoming environment of the office space encouraged better communication with staff members and her supervisors. Kara built relationships with other student co-workers and described the space as both "chill" and "friendly" where she felt trusted to do the work.

Professional Development

Kara said that her work-study position allowed her to grow more out of her shy demeanor to learn how to communicate better with others. Even though there were slow periods in her role, Kara described herself as a "self-starter" in finding different additional tasks to complete during the day. She adapted to working with different supervisors and learned how to be part of a team. In working with and assisting other people, Kara realized that she would enjoy roles where she can help other people.

While her work-study position differs from her area of study, Kara expressed an understanding of the experiences needed to achieve her goal of becoming an environmental consultant. Kara intended to pursue more research opportunities with a professor at SUU, along with an internship more closely related to her area of study. Kara was involved in many student organizations at SUU centered around building a community for Latinx STEM students. It was by exposure to these channels and student networks that Kara even thought of considering a work-study position after hearing about the on-campus work experiences of her peers.

It is through these organizations that Kara engaged in professional development like resume critiques and workshops and mock interview tips provided through the Latinx STEM organization. Therefore, while Kara expressed having a positive experience while working on campus, her role as a records assistant was not the sole contributor to enhancing her employability compared to the impact and exposure from external influences like student organization involvement.

Maria: "An Office Setting Is Not For Me"

Maria was a 19-year-old full-time freshman student at SUU. She was pursuing a degree in Psychology on the pre-medical track with a minor in Biology. Maria grew up in a suburban area in the South in "a big Mexican family." She grew up constantly surrounded by young children, which influenced her desire to work with children in some capacity. Growing up, Maria always knew she wanted a career in medicine, but it was her high school teacher who introduced her to different paths in healthcare.

Maria desired to take part in experiences in preparation for medical school to pursue a career as a pediatrician. Maria was involved in many leadership roles and organizations during her high school career, including serving as a student mentor and participating in Student

Council, National Honor Society, Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), and her high school band. She attributed these experiences with providing her with leadership and teamwork skills but desired to continue to develop these skills as a freshman in addition to learning about other cultures. For this reason, Maria decided to enroll at SUU:

> Coming here, I knew I wanted to explore the difference of the ethnic groups, I guess. 'Cause [in high school], I was just like the majority, and that's when my sister called me a 'coconut' for that reason. 'Cause she said I'm brown on the outside, but I'm white on the inside because that's what I grew up in, and I try to fit into that. So coming here, I kind of wanted to embrace my own culture before anything else. 'Cause I didn't…there wasn't that many people there to experience it.

Maria stated that her high school lacked diversity, so she hoped her experience at SUU would allow her to interact with individuals from different cultures and broaden her exposure to diversity. At the time of our interview, Maria showcased this exposure and diversity engagement through henna artwork painted on her hand from a recent basketball tailgate for SUU Homecoming. Maria had previously worked as a crew member for a popular fast-food restaurant. She enjoyed communicating with customers about their food orders, either in person or over the phone. She preferred to continue working and needed the income, so she decided to accept her work-study award when she enrolled at SUU. The appeal of work-study was the opportunity to have a work position that she could balance with her schoolwork. She also wanted to relieve the financial burden from her family by maintaining a work-study position:

> So, it's actually just my mom. She's helping me pay off my tuition here. So taking that was an extra support for her and an extra support for me, so she pays that off. And then this money for work-study helps me with the little stuff I need here …If I need more school supplies, I can use the money from work-study to help me with that.

Maria found her work-study position by browsing opportunities through the SUU Career Services online job portal. She decided to apply for and accept a position as an office assistant under the College of Liberal Arts:

> I'm under the College of Liberal Arts. So, I knew I wanted to work underneath it, so I looked for positions underneath it. And then I found two: one was with academic affairs and then one with the dean's office…I felt like it would be more beneficial to work under the dean 'cause then they would be able to help me if I needed anything.

As an office assistant, Maria's position involved various administrative tasks. Her role at the office included reviewing documents for different departments, submitting these documents to her supervisor, checking in packages, and maintaining the office space to ensure it stays clean and orderly.

The office where she worked was relatively quiet, according to Maria. She shared her cubicle workspace with two other older students: one sophomore and one junior. She stated that she got along well with these students and found them to be nice and helpful. She engaged in peer-to-peer training after individual instruction and online training from her direct supervisor. Maria documented all her training in a personal notepad that she said she would reference when she needed to. Maria enjoyed the work environment and her relationships with coworkers and supervisors:

> They always ask me how my weekend is. They always ask me how my day's going, when I go in. And they're all very supportive and helpful with anything, and they know when my birthday is too now. So … they told me happy birthday. They gave me a card and everything. I know all of them, and they're really nice. I really like that.

Her most meaningful work experience was due the supportive culture of her work environment:

> There was one weekend, I had to leave, it was on a Friday… I had to leave to go home 'cause there was a family emergency. And when I came back, they were all really nice and being supportive, and they're just wondering if I was okay, if I needed anything, if I needed some time off… all so I feel like recuperating … [they were] being very helpful… It was like they care about me. They're just not here for me to … it made me see that I'm not just there to do that, to help and then to slave, but they actually care about how I'm doing. And I think that was the big thing that I remember 'cause it wasn't that long ago.

The positive environment notwithstanding, Maria also faced a few frustrations. The first was that she felt intimated by working in the same space as the Dean and noticed how the office became

more serious upon his arrival. Although she liked her coworkers, she found that she related more easily to one coworker than the other, which sometimes made communication and collaboration difficult in the workspace. Further, she did not find her responsibilities to be complicated; yet, her other frustration was with her daily work tasks and responsibilities. Maria found she had a great deal of downtime in her 15-hour workweek:

> Sometimes there's nothing to do, and then I'm doing work and I started doing homework, and it's weird. I'm doing homework for three hours because there's nothing to do. But as soon as I'm in the middle of something, it's time I get to do something, and then I come back, and I'm distracted on my homework because I don't know where I leave off. So, but that's the only thing, because other than that, I like everyone I worked with, and the stuff is not hard either.

Maria expressed frustration and conflicted feelings with this dilemma because she wanted to be productive at work and because she wanted to make a positive impression with the staff and Associate Deans at her job. When asked what she learned about herself through campus work-study, Maria reflected on her values and personal interests along with her likes and dislikes:

> I think I learned that an office setting is not for me. 'Cause working there…I like it there because I'm still undergrad but if I continued working there … throughout my whole life, I just couldn't do it … I feel trapped in the room all the time. I just feel like I have to stay here and do this the whole time. Meaning "this" meaning my homework because that's all I do in the back. But yeah … I could not see myself working in an office setting or teaching.

Maria observed how the Associate Deans taught various courses on campus. The responsibility of the role did not appeal to her as something she would consider as a career path. For the time being, Maria had decided that she would try to keep working on campus through work-study because of the convenience and short distance to her classes.

Understanding Work Preferences

By enrolling at an HSI, Maria hoped to engage in a new experience different from those of her high school and neighborhood, both of which she felt lacked diversity. Since SUU was

known for its a multicultural environment, Maria's work-study space naturally fell into this category. Maria mentioned experiencing diversity through her interactions with students and her extracurricular activities. Maria connected this exposure to diversity with her understanding that as a potential physician, she would be working with different groups of people with diverse backgrounds and beliefs. She recognized that this ability to work with diverse groups would be an important skill to acquire. Her experiences and campus exposure allowed her to embrace this even more. Maria displayed a general awareness of her likes and dislikes with regards to a future career, and her work-study placement allowed her to understand this further. Maria acknowledged that an office environment would not be the best fit because she felt she would enjoy a workspace that was livelier and where she did not feel confined. After observing the work of the deans, Maria noted that teaching would not be of interest to her because the work she witnessed did not appeal to her. Other aspects of the position that she did not enjoy included dealing with finances or not having enough work to do.

On-Campus Relationships

Maria strategized the selection of her work-study experience. One of the reasons she chose the role was that it provided an opportunity to develop connections as a new student by networking with faculty and staff connected to her area of study. Relationship building was an important factor for Maria in her work-study experience. Maria made positive statements about her work-study experience at the Dean's office. This positive review stemmed from the relationships developed in the workspace through interactions with her peers, staff, and supervisors. Maria expressed that while the office environment seemed intimidating at times, she felt comfortable enough to engage with the dean if she had any questions or concerns. The office culture enabled Maria to seek out that mentorship and feel comfortable doing so.

Maria also noted that the staff seemed nice, supportive, and helpful when she was sick. This was meaningful to her because they showed care in understanding her needs and her role as a student. Actions of staff and supervisors, like remembering her birthday, taking the time to get to know her better, or being there to answer questions, also seemed to make a positive impact. Maria noted that her advisor pushed her and seemed to encourage her to think about how she could improve in different areas. Maria stated that communication and task delegation are skills she desired to improve. These types of interactions strengthened her on-campus relationships.

Family Obligation

Another key factor in Maria's decision to accept her work-study award was that the position would provide the financial support needed for her and her family. Maria explained that her mother was supporting Maria financially by paying for Maria's tuition. Maria desired to provide extra support for her mother by securing out an opportunity to cover additional expenses like her school supplies and textbooks. Maria considered this a personal responsibility that she decided to take on in order to relieve some financial burden from her mother for miscellaneous expenses.

Maria understood her needs coming into college and took steps to ensure she could provide for these additional needs. Maria also chose to take on a work-study position because of the proximity to her classes and the fact that she would be able to balance her work-study schedule with her coursework. Academics were at the forefront for Maria, so she wanted a position that would not impede her studies or interfere with her success as a first-year student.

Room for Improvement

Through her high school experiences, Maria held a few leadership roles in different student organizations. She attributed much of her leadership ability to these experiences and

believed that she was very proficient in this area. By working with the other student workers and with the deans, Maria said she had grown in her teamwork ability. Maria expressed that being at SUU, she was in an environment where she had to learn how to work with individuals with different backgrounds and skillsets. This experience differed from her fast food experience as a crew member, where Maria had to adapt to being in an office setting. Maria connected teamwork and working with different people to her career path as a future physician. She recognized that she would have to continually learn how to communicate and interact with others with backgrounds, personalities, and perspectives different from her own.

Maria was frustrated with balancing her personal goal to be productive with a lack of daily tasks to complete in her student worker role. Maria felt that she did not have enough tasks to complete each day. However, Maria did struggle with communication in the workplace and did not indicate in her interview if she asked her direct supervisor for more work to do or how she could be more helpful.

Maria said she was proactive in how she approached her responsibilities and would take her own initiative to complete tasks around the office that she saw needed that needed to be undertaken. Maria stated that her main responsibilities would usually take just an hour to complete. Since she worked 15 hours per week, Maria filled any extra time by doing her homework at her job. This frustrated her, and she expressed guilt about working on homework while being around the Dean and Associate Deans.

Sophia: "A Second Family"

Sophia studied political science with a minor in Spanish at SUU. She identified as Latina with family from both Guatemala and El Salvador. She was 19-years-old, and it was her first year at SUU as a freshman. Sophia hoped to become a lawyer—specifically an immigration

lawyer—after having witnessed family members navigate the immigration process in the United States:

> …It's a topic that really hits home and I can really relate to. And you know, with your job, you always want to make the world a better place. But genuinely, I feel like that's my way of contributing to society. If I were to do that, 'cause not only would I understand what they're going through, but I also, I'm bilingual and so then I can help out there too.

Originally, Sophia considered becoming a psychologist like her sister but said that growing up, her parents always joked that she should pursue law because of her argumentative and stubborn nature. Sophia witnessed family members endure ineffective legal representation and the financial burdens and stress of having to secure an immigration lawyer. Therefore, she desired to improve the experiences of others and ultimately make a difference.

Sophia said she enjoyed her political science courses along with her courses in Spanish, which increased her language fluency. Sophia planned to graduate from SUU by December 2022 since she said she entered college with many credits. Sophia also addressed that she was a first-generation college student and explained what it meant to her:

> It just means that I have to make my parents proud, number one, and number two, just that … it's another Hispanic getting ahead from actual immigrants. My dad … his highest education level was third grade, but he's the smartest person I know … He is so smart. But yeah, my mom got her GED and she got a few college… once we were older and she had more time.

Sophia said she chose to enroll at SUU because of the campus diversity which differed from her hometown. She said that she appreciated that she could meet individuals from all different nations and not "just Mexico and then white." She discussed how she already made developed a relationship with a student from Lebanon and also connected with a student from Palestine and Columbia. Sophia was actively attempting to get more involved at SUU. To further engage with the campus community, Sophia joined a campus youth ministry organization and was also in the

process of applying for a position with her campus's Residence Hall Association. She also joined a Latinx mentorship program:

> So, it's just kind of a mentorship program, kind of. And it's a communal thing where Latin women just kind of get together, and we help each other out or just come together for socials and just kinda really indulge in the Hispanic heritage that we all share. So, it's cool.

Sophia learned of the mentorship opportunity and became interested in joining through the advice of a staff member at her work-study. Sophia worked as a peer career advisor (PCA) for SUU Career Services and began this role early in the fall semester. She came to campus planning on securing a work-study position after accepting her award through FAFSA. She said she obtained the position through an on-the-spot interview at the campus career fair:

> Honestly, I was looking for something in the law field … going in there and that's what I was looking forward to. But when I went … honestly, it was a strange miracle by God, honestly, how I got this job. I'm not even joking … I went in the last 40-ish minutes or an hour 'cause I was really busy earlier 'cause it was my move-in day. And so, I said bye to my parents. I got ready, and then I came over here, and so then all the law tables were empty already … They had packed up and left. And so, then I was just looking around, and then I came upon the Career Services, and I [said], "I wonder what that is." And so, I just went, and I asked, and she looked at my resume, and then she [said], "Well we want to interview."

Sophia had various responsibilities including reviewing more than 200 student resumes a week, managing the front desk, and assisting the career counselors with other miscellaneous tasks as needed:

> I genuinely love working there … it's really cool, and all the things that I've learned from working there, resume and job wise and interview wise, it's actually been a learning experience as well as a work experience. And so that's also something that I really enjoy about it.

Sophia said that providing great customer service was an important part of her PCA role. While she managed the front desk, Sophia communicated with students who visited the career services office for appointments and meetings with career counselors. She answered student questions

and helped them understand how to navigate the career services job portal where students could schedule appointments, apply for positions, and view upcoming career-related events and programs.

Sophia stated there was nothing that she disliked about her work-study position. She said the office space had "positive energy," where she felt supported as both a student and a student worker. This appeared both in her interactions with staff and with other PCA's. Sophia said she works alongside around 12 other student workers and that she got along with them well:

> And then with my coworkers, the rest of the PCAs, we're all pretty close…we all joke around all the time. So, it's so fun to work with them and talk 'cause they're all goofballs and all of us together, we just make the dumbest jokes, but it's fun. And so that's cool too. 'Cause if it's slow, we'll just be talking to each other [saying] "Oh, how's this class? How's that class?" or just showing each other memes sometimes.

She also thought the staff was "nice" and understanding of her needs, whether she needed a day off due to sickness or if her schedule needed to be adjusted to allow for travel to visit family. Sophia acknowledged that since she was new to the role, she experienced frustration in learning different aspects of the job or wanting to help a student but not knowing exactly how to assist them. However, Sophia said she felt comfortable enough to ask questions of the career counselors or the other student workers. Other student workers who had more experience in the office trained Sophia. She mentioned learning from both a senior student and a sophomore student and stated that being trained by her peers helped her best understand how different students approached their job.

Sophia has also found other benefits in her role since her direct supervisor has required all student workers to hold career appointments with their designated career advisor:

> For me specifically, I want to go abroad this summer and then next summer get an internship or in the fall get an internship. But I didn't know exactly where I was gonna place either of those. And so [Miss A], cause she's my advisor, she helped me map it out and plan it out, and they have, for the different majors, they have steps … This is what

> you should be in your freshman year, and this is where you should be sophomore year. And just they have a lot of resources, honestly. And so, it was cool to be able to be in the appointment as well.

Sophia said her work-study was a great experience because she learned from other students, but also learned more about herself through helping others. She felt motivated to continue learning and viewed her work-study as a learning experience.

Because Sophia worked at the main career center for the SUU campus, she was exposed to and familiar with the NACE competencies during her student evaluation. Upon reflection, she saw that she further developed her leadership skills originally acquired through her experiences in high school:

> Honestly, a lot of leadership stuff. I've always been in leadership positions. In my high school, I was captain of the step team [inaudible]. So, I was captain of that, and I was also in [National Honor Society], and I was in student council. And so, I've been with leadership decisions, but I feel like that helped me professionally. 'Cause before it was a lot of student interactions. And even though now it's student interactions, it's more professional 'cause we not only get students, but we get alumni, and we get actual employers who come in to do job interviews or … sometimes they do meet and greets and so, we'll have them coming in too. And so, it's just, you have to learn from a student to employer the different 'professionalisms' to take.

Sophia said her student worker role had been beneficial because she utilized many of the practical skills such as resume building and navigating the career services portal. Sophia said that her work-study experience reaffirmed that she would like a career where she would be engaged in person-focused work.

Education First

Sophia framed her work-study award acceptance as taking advantage of an opportunity rather than as a personal financial need. She valued the idea of having an experience oriented around learning and building relationships. From her perspective, work-study allowed her to place her education and personal career goals first. She referenced this when discussing how her

supervisors allowed her to adjust her work schedule based on her course schedule or class needs. With her personal goal of graduating in two years, Sophia appeared to maintain a primary focus on opportunities that would allow her to achieve this goal. She was also in the process of preparing for the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) during her first year of college, which demonstrated her determination to succeed and prepare for her next step of eventually applying to law schools. As a first-generation student, Sophia also expressed how educational achievement at the college level would make her parents proud.

The theme of "education first" also appeared when Sophia mentioned that she would use downtime to work on homework as needed because the work-study environment allowed her to do so. Sophia's attainment of her work-study position came about by happenstance. She attended the career fair with law-related on-campus positions in mind but came across the opportunity at the career services office by chance. Sophia expressed that she was happy and thankful that she found this role because of the positive work culture and knowledge she gained.

Latinx Identity

The topic of Sophia's Latinx identity appeared many times throughout the interview. Her career path and interests have been shaped by events she personally witnessed that affect the Latinx community. She expressed a passion for assisting those who faced immigration barriers into the U.S. and desired to make a positive difference in the Latinx community and other persons of color. She also acknowledged that developing further proficiency in the Spanish language would also allow her to serve Latinx populations in need of this assistance.

In and outside of her work-study, Sophia was able to find mentors in other Latina women on campus. Her direct supervisor and another counselor on staff both identified as Latina and introduced Sophia to the campus mentorship program so she could build more relationships with

Hispanic women on campus. Sophia valued these spaces for providing her with the ability to explore her identity further and build relationships with women of a similar background to her. Sophia was also able to gain tailored career advice from her counselor, who introduced her to the mentorship program, which Sophia appreciated. For example, the counselor offered to assist Sophia with any job application or graduate school application materials. This environment of support connected with identity seemed to resonate with Sophia and contributed to her opinion of her work-study placement as a positive experience.

Learning Environment

One consistent concept repeated by Sophia throughout the interview was the idea of work-study as a learning experience and the notion that Sophia engaged in learning on the job. From her perspective, work-study would provide the environment to learn in different ways and build connections, which is why she chose to pursue a work-study position. Sophia reflected on the fact that an important aspect of her work experience was the abilities she gained in understanding resume writing and job interviewing. She was able to learn more about these skills through reviewing other students' resumes and through the mock interview program that she helped to facilitate. Sophia expressed that through helping other students, she was able to reinforce her own understanding of the topic areas.

Sophia also described the work environment as a space for learning where she felt comfortable asking questions and making mistakes on the job. Through this culture, the office provided a collaborative space where the student workers could feel motivated to learn. Learning also appeared as frustration for Sophia as she desired to learn quickly on the job, yet her supervisor reassured her that it was acceptable to not know everything at once. Sophia said the role so far had helped her grow and that the role did not feel like a job.

Second Family

Sophia expressed that the staff and students that she works with at her work-study became like a second family due to positive interactions in the workplace. Sophia first described how the counselors desired to assist her with her career development outside of the workplace and how the counselors made a concerted effort to learn her name. Sophia described how a counselor would take the time to explain a concept or help her map out short-term goals for her sophomore year. These gestures appeared to resonate with Sophia, causing her to feel a genuine positive connection with the staff.

Her close relationships with her coworkers also helped Sophia have a positive experience. Sophia felt comfortable joking with and learning from the other PCAs. As a team, she referred to the group as an extended support system. The students worked with each other and learned from each other, which fostered a collaborative space.

As a first-year student, Sophia formed bonds with upperclassmen students and gained advice on topics outside the office, such as student involvement and leadership opportunities on campus. Each student brought a unique perspective to the office, which Sophia appeared to enjoy in terms of diversity of background and thought. Sophia also said that if the counselors and PCA team members were not as nice, the work-study experience might not have been as positive for her.

Cross-Case Analysis of Findings

Literature focused on federal work-study highlighted that undergraduate students engage in the program for financial support; however, few authors discussed innovations, best practices, or explored even the real-life experiences of work-study students on campus. Specific to the growing population of Latinx students nationwide, the researcher sought to explore how Latinx

students connect on-campus work to their career development and make meaning of their employment experience. As shown in Table 4.2, the within-case themes of the six Latinx student workers from SUU are presented and aligned with components of the theoretical framework.

Table 4.2

Conceptual Theoretical Framework Matrix Paired with Within-Case Themes

Theories	Cross-Case Theme	Within-Case Theme
Happenstance Learning (Krumboltz, 2009)	Building Key Career Skills	Personal Career Development (Emily) Connection to Career (DJ) Diverse Benefits of Work-Study (Astrid) Positive Workplace (Kara) Understanding Work Preferences (Maria) On-Campus Relationships (Maria) Learning Environment (Sophia) Education First (Sophia)
	Convenience Makes a Difference	Motivations to Work (Emily) Financial Stress (DJ) Commute to Campus (Astrid) Convenience (Kara) Family Obligation (Maria) Education First (Sophia)
Self-Authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2004)	Impact of Workplace Representation & Positive Supervision	Individual Skills (Emily) Relationship Building (Emily) New Perspective (DJ) Developing Professional Skills (Astrid) Professional Development (Kara) Room for Improvement (Maria) Latinx Identity (Sophia) Second Family (Sophia)

The cross-case analysis revealed three themes based on commonalities across each case and linked to the central research question, which is *how do Latinx students connect on-campus*

work-study experiences to employability? The three themes are 1) Building Key Skills; 2) Convenience Makes a Difference; and 3) Impact of Workplace Representation and Positive Supervision.

Two overarching themes aligned with the two theoretical frameworks: 1) Krumboltz Happenstance Learning Theory (2009), and 2) Baxter Magolda's Theory of Self Authorship (2004). Savickas Career Construction Theory (2019) aligned with certain aspects of the cases but served as an additional lens to understanding gaps in constructing meaning. These theories formed a comprehensive theoretical lens to explore further how students make meaning of their work.

Building Key Career Skills

The majority of the participants stated that they would have preferred a role more closely aligned with their area of study and that they attempted to secure a more relevant position. Participants accepted their work-study positions because of their immediate financial need. However, they noted upon further reflection that there were additional benefits from their work-study placement, the first being skill attainment or development and awareness of new skills. As shown in Figure 4.1, based on the results from the demographic questionnaire, most participants reported they were either "Proficient" or "Very Proficient" in the eight career competencies. The highest proficiency rating was "Teamwork/Collaboration," and the lowest was "Career Management." The majority of the students described how these skills were developed or enhanced during their student employment. Each participant also indicated how some of these transferrable skills would be beneficial either directly or indirectly to their career. All of the work-study placements involved administrative or clerical work, which was typical for on-campus employment (NASFAA, 2016b; Scott-Clayton & Minaya, 2014). Participants listed a

variety of soft skills that they developed, including “communication,” “organization,” “patience,” “teamwork,” and “leadership.

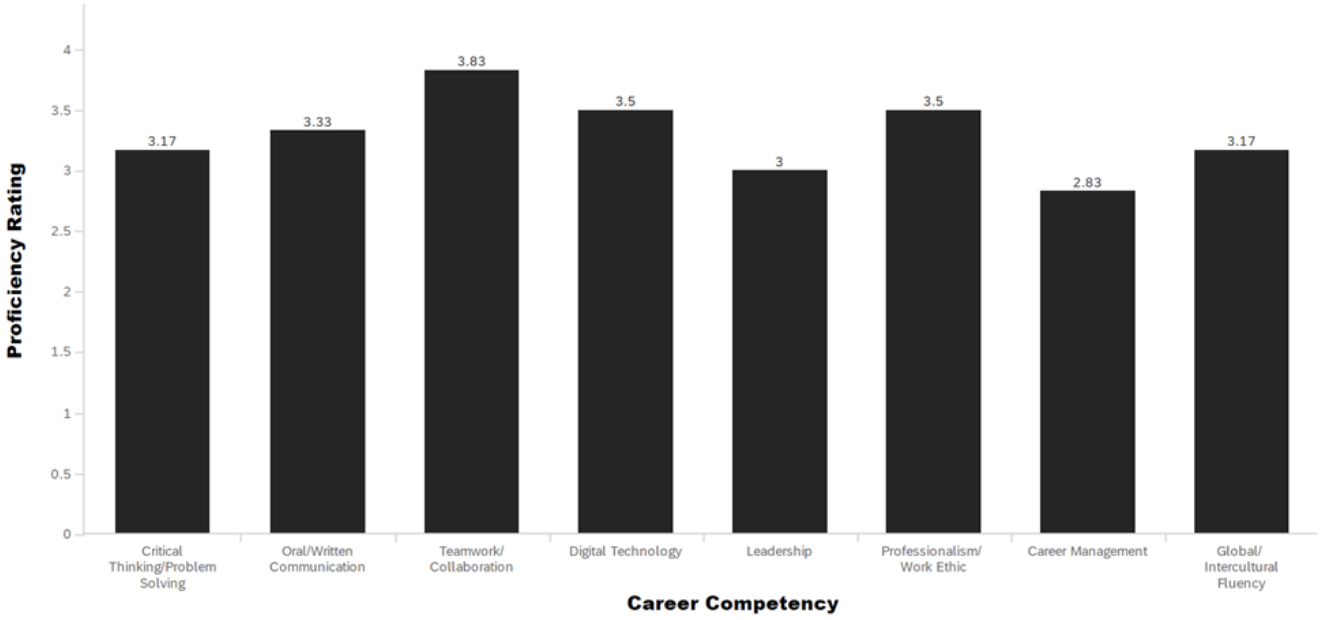

Figure 4.1. Mean Participant Ratings of Individual Proficiency in Career Competencies

The students addressed how they thought these skills would translate to their chosen career paths. Emily believed that her work-study experience cultivated her confidence in her interpersonal skills:

> I believe customer service and interacting with people just because I’ve gotten really good at that, interacting with different types of people and providing great customer service, and I believe those two skills carry on in any profession that you work in because you’re always going to have talks with people or meetings with people, and for HR, it is a lot of meeting people and marketing…well yeah, because you test products and stuff and you have to use people sometimes so you have to get their opinion.

Astrid, Maria, and DJ all had previous experience in the foodservice industry and compared their skills gained in work-study to those roles. Initially, Astrid framed her work-study by stating, “I just work at the front desk,” but after further discussion of her responsibilities, Astrid said, “It’s like kind of – I do a lot! Oh my god.” Astrid said she has talked to more people in her work-

study position than she ever did in previous food service roles. She mentioned skill development in teamwork, time management, and understanding students with disabilities and their campus experience. She said she enjoyed talking to students and was more patient when assisting students to ensure the student fully understood the process for testing with accommodations:

> So I think I mentioned before that sometimes the students try to make you accept some things, and you kind of have to tell them no because it is still your responsibility to get things in on time…You still have to turn things in on time, and you still have to be here on time. You can't just show up an hour late to an appointment and think that the counselor's going to make way for you … so definitely having to say no or having to act tough a certain way … I think that that job has given me that.
>
> And I think that it definitely has translated into my teaching as well 'cause [chuckles] there's some students who, you know, if you give them an inch, they take a mile, right? So, having to be a little firm with them, not necessarily mean, but having to let them know that, "Hey, I'm not going to let you push me around," it works for both ways with the younger kids and with university kids.

She said interaction like this would translate to her future career as a teacher by enabling her to approach students more patiently and communicate firmly but effectively.

With her career goal of becoming a pediatrician, Maria identified that teamwork was an important skill gained through her work-study that she believed would be transferrable:

> I think its teamwork because all the people I work with, including the deans, have different set skills and they like working in different ways. And [I] have to learn how to work with them … it's all different and how they work, and then they all have different personas. So being a team player – team member and working with them… It's just something I had to get into or get used to.
>
> I think it's working with the different people, how they all, they're all so different. In the future, I know I'm going to be working with people who are nicer than others or people that they just feel like they're superior … There are going to be different types of people, and I'm going to have to work with them and and still work with them…but still do work properly without butting heads or anything like that. 'Cause I think that's the main thing is working with others 'cause they all have different personas, and I guess that's something I'm going to have to get used to because the medical field is big, and then there are all different personalities who … don't show their emotions as much.

DJ became more confident in her leadership ability and also desired to improve her teamwork skills. She also discussed that she learned how to be more patient as she had to communicate

with diverse groups of people, and sometimes her workload would be hectic, so she had to make adjustments and learn how to serve students best.

Sophia framed her work-study experience as a learning experience and made efforts to engage in different aspects of the office in SUU Career Services. She expanded upon her customer service skills through communicating with students, alumni, and employers who visited the space. She also recognized that she enjoyed helping others and would like to pursue a career where she can make a positive contribution to society.

Kara also acknowledged that she had grown in her interpersonal skills, such as communication and conflict management:

> I was kind of shy about it, but over time I got used to being on the phone and asking the correct questions and helping [students] out … just acting like in a professional manner … I don't know, I feel like I've become more self-starting, I guess. I like having everything done. When I walk in, I don't wait for like them to ask me to do it. I like doing it when I first come in and getting everything done. I think those are like the two main things … but the main thing being the people … the people skill is just basically handling people who are upset or just helping them with their problems.

Convenience Makes a Difference

The majority of participants expressed that they would have preferred a role more closely related to their career path and made efforts to seek out related positions. However, they appeared satisfied with their work-study opportunity because it fulfilled one area of need while allowing them to engage in other opportunities. The convenience of work-study provided the students with more freedom to pursue other interests related to their career paths. Some students described working in previous roles off-campus that required 25 – 35 hours of work per week. Students did not find this to be optimal for their academic responsibilities.

Common motivators across the cases for pursuing work-study employment were "convenience," "flexibility," and "balance." Having a role with a flexible work schedule allowed

all the students to have more time to focus on their academics, which could be an important factor for attaining future employment. For Kara, her work-study role provided fulfillment in terms of income and proximity to classes. She appreciated her work-study role because it allowed her to continue to be actively engaged in other student opportunities like research or involvement in the Latinx STEM organization.

Emily desired an experience that would more directly align with her interests in marketing and human resources but having a more flexible option where she could focus on her academics appealed to her more. Both of her work-study positions appealed to Emily because she could build her work schedule could around her class schedule:

> The class schedule that I had when I worked for [SUU Disability Services] was a little weird because it was mostly morning classes, so I had to find a job that was still open pretty late, and [SUU Disability Services] was open till 7 some days and other days till 6, so it worked because I could get some hours in before I had to leave school… And then for the Financial Aid Office, they also worked with my schedule 'cause I had huge gaps this last semester … I have a morning class from 8:30 to 9:00 and a huge gap till 1:30 when my other class is… But most of the work-study positions I believe they have very flexible schedules.

Emily also recalled how her heavy course load and a lack of flexibility at a previous job caused her to seek other options:

> So, basically, after I left that job, that's when I started working at school 'cause I need something that's more flexible, and junior and senior year, I saw that it was more work that I had to do…more time that I had to spend studying and doing papers and stuff 'cause I was major focused more. So, that's why I decided to start working at work-study in school for my last two years of school.

Work-study also provided relief from financial stressors. All participants highlighted that on-campus employment helped provide financial relief through additional income. Both Emily and Astrid stated that they wanted to reduce their financial burdens and not have student debt. They also wanted a convenient job to balance the distance living off-campus. For Emily, she felt living off-campus put her at a disadvantage to secure the work opportunities she wanted while for

Astrid, living off-campus meant having to learn how to manage her time more effectively between on-campus work and the demands of her student teaching.

Being independent and having a source of income was a significant motivator for DJ in her desire to secure a work-study position. DJ expressed that managing finances was stressful, but she felt grateful that she could secure an opportunity to cover her expenses. As a transfer student, DJ desired to have a balance between her student life and personal life. Working on-campus in work-study allowed her to engage in other interests and enjoy her time living on campus at SUU.

Maria desired to relieve the financial burden from her family while focusing on being successful in school. Maria displayed a sense of personal responsibility, similar to the other participants of desiring to provide for herself while relieving the financial burden from her mother. Work-study provided a source of extra support while providing space to focus on other interests and endeavors:

> We always needed like actual financial support. So before coming here, when they offered to me, I was like, "I'm going to take it." And when I was looking, I knew I needed something like kind of office-related, and I feel like that helps me balance off my work, my schoolwork, and then actual work. So … I like balancing stuff at the same time. I like doing more of the things I want.

Witnessing injustice through the legal system concerning immigration and citizenship in the United States motivated Sophia toward her primary goal of becoming an attorney. Sophia talked about making her parents proud and the impact of being a first-generation student. Being first-generation seemed to be a pivotal part of her undergraduate student identity and also shaped her experience during her first year. Therefore, Sophia desired to place her education and career goals first. To her, having additional income was an added benefit of on-campus work in addition to the convenience and flexibility of the role.

Happenstance and Planned Happenstance

All of the research participants indicated that finances were a priority in selecting their work-study position, and each student decided to take advantage of their financial award. Most participants found their work-study opportunity by browsing potentially available options that best suit their interests, skillset, or immediate needs through the SUU Career Services Job Portal. Others stated that in addition to the portal, they also decided by attending the on-campus student employment career fair. There they met a staff member and discussed several aspects of the role, which helped them select their work-study.

Chance events, whether planned or unplanned, do have an impact on an individual's career exploration, depending on how they decide to engage in the experience (Krumboltz, 2009; Kim et al., 2014). Spontaneous events can eventually lead to established careers if the individual has the curiosity and optimism to find the value or create their luck. By definition, any situation could serve as an opportunity for learning and can influence human behavior. However, for this study, the researcher chose to explore the happenstance opportunity of work-study employment to evaluate chance meaning-making that may have occurred through the experience. The majority of participants learned new skills and gained a better understanding of their preferences for future work environments.

Unplanned Events. Sophia described the attainment of their work-study position as a "strange miracle by God" through coming across at staff member at a career fair. Sophia attended the fair seeking student employment related to law, but then happened upon the opportunity with career services. Sophia viewed her entire work-study experience as a space for learning and growth in terms of professional development. For Sophia, her work placement at SUU Career Services provided a nurturing environment ripe for growth and challenge.

Sophia displayed a 'growth mindset' through her goal for learning and having meaningful work. Some students enter college with a fixed mindset where they desire to be seen as smart and will stray from challenges where they believe they will not succeed or perform well. Maladaptive behaviors arise with this mindset because the student can become easily discouraged when faced with problems. Students with a 'growth mindset,' however, seek challenges and maintain a commitment to learning and mastery of the task with an optimistic outlook (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Dweck, 2010). Sophia recognized the opportunities available at SUU Career Services for mentorship, skill-building, and campus engagement as a first-year student.

Sophia was able to transform her chance experience into a learning opportunity for on-campus engagement through connection with the career counselors at her office, who introduced her to different experiences. As a first-generation student, building community at her work-study was also valuable to maintain a strong connection to SUU. As noted by Duncheon (2018), Latinx students transitioning into college can navigate better when taking advantage of available resources. Sophia was the only student who stated a different primary motivator for accepting work-study compared to other students as she seemed more focused on engaging in experiences where she could learn and grow in a way that would prepare her for admittance to law school.

SUU Disability Services served as a learning environment for Astrid as well, although her main motivator for seeking work-study was additional income and filling the available free time in her schedule with productive activities. The unplanned aspect of Astrid's work-study appeared in her selection of the opportunity by choosing "just what was available at the time," and the chance connection of skills to her career Astrid enhanced her communication and conflict management skills through her role at SUU Disability Services. She developed confidence in learning to be firm in a professional manner, which she stated would be helpful in

her career path as a teacher with providing structure and discipline in the classroom. Since Astrid was also engaged in co-teaching at a local middle school, she could apply skills gained from the workplace directly to this additional role. Astrid enjoyed helping students and found that she could fulfill this interest and value in both positions.

Astrid also addressed learning more about herself through interaction with supervisors and staff. She learned how to communicate better with supervisors and balance different leadership styles. Since being in the role for two years, Astrid developed confidence in her role and supporting the team:

> I still take the lead in some areas because it's me and the other girl 'part-timer' that are the most experienced at that time, but the other part timer she's not that … I don't know if the word is ambitious or the word is like she won't take charge sometimes … so it's mostly me who has to be like "You do that" or "You do this."

She was confident in her knowledge of the role and her ability to direct other student workers in the office. Based on this confidence and her familiarity with the office, Astrid's supervisor offered her a full-time position. Astrid found it meaningful that her supervisor would recommend her for a full-time role. The recommendation provided her with reassurance in her leadership abilities and confidence in her skill set in the workplace.

DJ and Maria also indicated that their work-study experience provided a space for learning; however, their learning was more of a clarification of their value set. Through DJ's experience, she chose to stay with the first work-study role that gave an offer after seeking positions more related to her interests. She established that an office environment and the tasks of an office assistant would not be the best fit for her. She evaluated that she would prefer careers that align with her passion for psychology and mental health. Therefore, she was able to recognize her career likes and dislikes through her work-study opportunity. DJ also experienced a challenge in the workplace of having to work with others since she preferred more independent

work and working alone. She said that she is "usually scared to do most things" and acknowledged that it takes time for her to feel confident and ask for help when needed. Between her first role with the Admissions Office and the Eye Center, DJ admitted that she is still learning how to communicate best with supervisors:

> When I need help, like I get stuck on a tray that I'm not sure if I should shoot it over to this place or send it back or whatever. I sometimes, I know, cause [my supervisor is] always also busy, so I don't want to intervene and be rude or just sound rude or anything. So I just wait there patiently until she's okay for me to approach. She's approachable, but it's just, I don't want to be so overbearing.

Her work role challenged her tendency to shy away from speaking up and asking for help, but it appeared that she did not fully master this area during her experience. As a graduating senior, this will be areas of growth for DJ in learning how to support a team but find roles where she can work independently.

Maria established that roles related to teaching and an office setting would not be the best fit for her as she would be too confined to one space. While teaching or being in an office setting would not be the best fit, she reflected on the importance of difference and embracing different personalities and work styles. Maria selected her role with the College of Liberal Arts with the hope of building connections and relationships. As a first-year student, developing mentor relationships was an important goal of her work-study placement.

Like Sophia, Maria reported that various aspects of the work culture and environment were supportive, flexible, and collaborative, which allowed Maria to feel comfortable in creating connections. Maria valued diversity in the workplace and interacted with individuals who have different views and perspectives. While working with individuals with different views and work styles is just one aspect of diversity, Maria learned how building upon global and intercultural fluency would assist her in her journey to become a pediatrician.

According to Mitchell et al. (1999), the benefits of planned happenstance take hold when students have the curiosity, persistence, flexibility, optimism, and risk-taking skills to capitalize on the even and maximize learning. The individual should be able to find potential career connections. Maria, DJ, Astrid, and Sophia seemed to capitalize on their work-study experience to engage in some form of learning. They either came into work with an open mindset to learn, took the initiative to improve on certain skills, or evaluated their values and interests.

Planned Events. All participants were engaged in some form of extracurricular activity during the academic year. DJ served as an academics chair in her sorority and worked seasonally at a soup and salad buffet. Maria attended many cultural campus events. Sophia was involved in a Latina mentorship program, a campus ministry, and was in the process of applying to RHA. Astrid was heavily involved with student teaching outside of work hours and school and was the only student with formal internship experience. Student involvement is an integral part of campus life and mechanism to facilitate student development (Astin, 1984). These external experiences certainly provided additional skill-building opportunities outside of work-study. For example, Emily and Kara addressed the importance of external influences related to career development and employability outside their work-study position that they found helpful.

Emily expressed that working on-campus did allow her to build on her customer service skills and communication skills, which she said would be beneficial in roles like human resources and marketing that are very person-centered. However, when discussing real-world preparation, she also credited her outside activities as sources for this development. For Emily, she heavily engaged in volunteering positions and student involvement in SHRM to prepare herself for greater opportunities in Human Resources. The mentorship and advice gained through networking supported her decision making for graduate school. It was valuable to her and

seemed to resonate with her more than the time spent in the SUU Disability Services or Financial Aid Office.

Kara described more professional development learning and exposure from external sources such as membership in a Latinx STEM student organization on-campus. Through the organization, she received mentorship, earned leadership roles, and participated in career workshops. Kara said:

> Being in a STEM organization … it's geared towards Latinos and there's a lot of people in there who are in campus jobs and stuff. And I think they also helped push me towards getting like work-study and stuff. 'Cause I would hear about them like, "Oh, I work at this place" and then I look it up. It's like a work-study job and, "Oh, okay. Like maybe I should get work study."

By planned happenstance, Kara decided to apply to work-study based on the guidance of her peers. Kara planned to engage in research related to her area of study and also planned to apply to summer geological internships. Through her work-study experience, Kara realized that she enjoyed helping others and improved her communication skills. Kara tended to be shy but said she grew in this area by being placed in a position where she constantly communicated either over the phone or to patrons as they entered the office space. The results of her interview showed that she felt her work-study environment at the College of Architecture was a positive experience, but not a central learning environment to prepare her for a role in environmental consulting.

Impact of Workplace Representation & Positive Supervision

Most of the participants showcased that having a positive work culture and friendly supervisors provided a better work-study experience and influenced how they viewed their work. The influence of having a supervisor who was engaged and whose actions appeared to have the student's best interest in mind seemed to resonate with most of the participants. Students

appreciated that their supervisors took time to get to know them better, asked about their area of study and career goals, remembered small details about the students, or showed flexibility when personal emergencies arose. Common descriptors of current supervisors were "understanding," "supportive," "positive," and "willing to help."

Kara described the office atmosphere in the College of Architecture as "friendly" and "relaxed." She enjoyed the positive environment through the relationships cultivated with other student workers and staff, the training experience, and supportive work culture. Kara referenced that the staff had an open-door policy that encouraged more communication and office camaraderie.

Maria and Sophia, who were both freshmen, both looked for mentorship and relationships to help them transition into college. Maria valued the professional connections and potential mentoring relationships through her work-study at the College of Liberal Arts. She found her supervisors to be "very supportive and helpful" and could ask for assistance when needed. She appreciated that the supervisors took the time to celebrate her birthday or would ask how her day is going. Simple gestures like these had a meaningful impact on the students.

The collaborative culture of SUU Career Services impacted Sophia. She developed friendships with the other peer career advisors and used the term "family" often to describe her office relationships. Sophia valued that the counselors and staff took the time to learn the names of each student worker:

> Whenever I first started working there, it was really cool 'cause a lot of the counselors, made it a point to learn our names. And so any time that they would come up to the desk, they'd [say], "Hi,[Sophia]" or, "Hi, whoever. Hi, whoever." … They always addressed us by our names to learn our names. And so that also helps 'cause it wasn't just, "Okay, I'm working with these random people that don't even know my name." They made it a point to learn our names, and I thought that was really cool 'cause instead of treating this just kind of, "Okay, the new people." They actually learned our names and talk to us. And some of them even remember my major, which I think is pretty cool…

Supervisors that pushed students to communicate more or think more critically about issues also were described by students positively. Maria said, "once I start something, I like keeping it to myself. I like finishing it myself." Her supervisor challenged her to communicate more with other staff, provide more updates on completed tasks, and ask for help when needed.

DJ said working in the Admissions Office was not the right fit for her because outside of disliking the daily tasks, she felt she could not connect with her supervisor. DJ expressed that her supervisor in that role was harsh and negative. In her opinion, DJ tried to do the work and was met with constant criticism. DJ's supervisor at the Eye Center, however, appeared to have a different approach:

> I usually am afraid to approach people, so being able to just go up to her and just be like, "I need help with this. I don't remember how to do this or whatnot." And then she'd be like, "Oh okay. It's okay sweetie. We can do this and that and this," and she explains to me like a very detailed explanation so I can remember, and I will take notes. I jot down notes to make sure I remember everything.

Emily credited the staff at the SUU Disability Services for pushing her to engage more with students and overcome her shy nature:

> …My coworkers and my boss would [say], "You need to talk [Emily]. You need to speak up. Get out of your comfort zone. These are just students just like you, so you'll be fine." And then after the first semester I worked there, I noticed I was really saying hi to everyone and very talkative and everything. And now, [at the Financial Aid Office] where literally my job is talking to people all the time … I feel like I perform better at it and know how to talk to people — to different people better because of that experience. I was able to be more open to people and talk to them.

Diversity in the workplace and mentorship were also important during work-study. Sophia and DJ both highlighted the impact of working in diverse spaces – specifically the impact of working with Latinx professionals and how this shaped their view of career. DJ's work-study experience exposed her to women in leadership roles and financial success that she had not seen before:

> … I used to be a cashier at a … soup and salad buffet. [laughs] And it was…an environment of all people of color and then it was all Latinos. And they would always tell me, "Life is very hard. Just make sure you graduate. I'm struggling right now." Every single one of the workers would tell me that. And being able to see from that to see my manager [say], "Oh, I'm going to buy these tickets for a little Christmas thing" or things like that … That's a huge difference from, "Oh, just keep going and keep going. Life is hard," to "Oh, I have money for this." That was a huge change for me 'cause … I don't know of any people of color that have money or come from money. So, it was a big change. It was a big change to see that for me.

Sophia referenced how all the counselors and staff at SUU Career Services provided support and guidance for her in her work, however, both her supervisor and personal career counselor appeared to play more of a mentorship role. Outside of this role, counselors asked Sophia to assist them with other projects. One project that she referenced assisting a counselor with was a mock interview program for a career-focused course:

> It was so fun. She has [a class] … basically, it's just kind of a leadership thing that she explains to them career stuff. And so, she gave them the opportunity as an assignment to get mock interviews. And so, then they each sign up for a time slot and she printed out, their names and the times and who the interviewer was going to be. But the day of, four of the interviewers didn't show up and so [the counselor] had to take over some. And so, she really just kinda [said], "Okay, here we go. Figure it out." … We had to move people around … Some people would show up late, and so I would have to put them with another interviewer and then it was a lot of moving around, flexibility, and working with things.

Sophia enjoyed assisting with organizing the event, participating in the student interviews, and also, as an outsider, observing how students reacted to the mock interview experience.

The career counselors at SUU Career Services also connected Sophia to groups related to Latinx identity for support. While a first-year student and identifying as a first-generation student, Sophia deeply appreciated these supports to build community on campus. It allowed her to find spaces to connect and also embrace the benefits of diversity at SUU. DJ and Sophia's experiences showcased the power of representation in the workplace. Having quality supervision and support during work-study mattered to students.

Journey to Self-Authorship

Few studies that included the theory of self-authorship aligned it with career decision making and professional development. Nevertheless, Creamer and Laughlin (2005) and Nadelson et al. (2015) successfully applied the self-authorship framework to understand the epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal development students experienced concerning career development. While modeled as a linear process, Baxter Magolda (2004) theorized that students enter at separate phases in their journey to self-authorship as they encounter different experiences in life. For this study, the researcher chose to explore self-authorship with a specific focus on the meaning-making of on-campus student employment.

Following External Formulas to Crossroads. Most of the participants stated that there would be slow or "boring" periods during their work-study experience, where they had to fill the extra time with random tasks. For some, this involved doing their homework during the workday. Maria addressed her frustration and struggle between desiring to be a good employee and make a positive impression at the workplace while also using her downtime effectively. With her goal of building positive relationships with the deans in the office, Maria desired to show that she is a hardworking student and that she was "productive."

She expressed guilt in working on class assignments during her work-study but did not know how to navigate this issue best. Maria made sure she completed her daily tasks and then was left with "nothing to do," but she also did not seem to ask how else she could help. As a first-year student, Maria had to transition to the college environment and understand how to work and function independently. Students who follow external formulas still rely on authority to provide solutions to periods of uncertainty. This tension of navigating professionalism in the workplace and desiring to present herself in a positive light in the workplace displayed that

Maria was internalizing external "shoulds" (Baxter Magolda, 2004, p.72). Maria seemed to attempt to define who she would be as a student employee and how she wanted to present herself in the workplace during her first year in college. However, it seemed she was waiting on authority to provide a solution and direction. Maria appeared to be moving away from pre-authorship and following formulas into a crossroads phase.

Baxter Magolda (2004) wrote that cognitive development in self-authorship highlights the differences between believing what someone in authority believes versus having a grounded internal belief system. Cognitive development is expressed through decision making, behavior, or opinions. Emily faced a crossroads during her undergraduate experience through the end of a personal relationship before her senior year. Through personal reflection, she realized that she was capable of moving forward in pursuing her interests in human resources, marketing, and even a graduate degree. This experience, while jarring, was a changing point for her. Coupled with all her experiences, including work-study, Emily showcased a sense of confidence in her abilities. Emily fostered positive relationships with her supervisors, who pushed her to build internal confidence in her abilities through her communication skills.

Emily explained that she was hesitant to communicate with strangers and that her supervisors challenged her to have a different approach to work and how she connected with patrons. She also developed unexpected friendships during her work-study experience. She displayed a sense of independence and has made plans to move forward in the next steps of her career path, which showcased trust in her voice in being the author of her life.

Astrid hit a crossroad during her work-study experience in understanding herself and how she wanted to interact with others when it came to conflict management and setting boundaries. She had stated that she was naturally inclined to be more understanding and empathetic with

students and their needs.Over time and by viewing the example set by other team members, Astrid learned how to be firm in the workplace and say "no" when needed while still adjusting to student needs.

DJ referenced seeing Latinx individuals in her previous food-service job outside of work-study in spaces where they desired change and greater opportunity. DJ had never seen a Latina in a leadership role before in the workplace and could only reference her restaurant experience where she saw individuals struggling, apparently without much opportunity. This exposure formed a crossroads for DJ with this new perspective for success and opportunity. DJ now had additional insights to form her internal definition.

Shift to Self-Authorship in the Workplace. Few participants demonstrated a true shift into becoming self-authored through their work-study experience. Baxter Magolda (2004) addressed this issue in her book by stating that most on-campus employment experiences are more task-oriented and less focused on challenging a student's sense of knowing. Most of the participants in her study experienced transformation and embarked on their journey to self-authorship once placed in more professional work settings. Therefore, the opportunities to challenge their ways of knowing or shifts in what they believed could not be fully cultivated during their work-study at SUU. Still, the relational aspects of their work-study experience did have an influence on their self-authorship journey.

Intrapersonal development and interpersonal development are relational concepts. Intrapersonal development spans between defining oneself through others to choosing an independent identity, while interpersonal development explores the growth in constructing relationships. For example, Sophia's experience blended both intrapersonal and interpersonal understanding of seeking to define her internal sense of self while building positive on-campus

relationships as a freshman. Her open attitude for learning and challenge promoted growth into understanding her internal self. Kara showcased a sense of being grounded in her own beliefs in knowing her next steps to meet her career goals. Outside of work-study, Kara stated that she would pursue internships or research experiences in her field that would help best prepare her for work.

Baxter Magolda (2004) wrote that trust is a significant component of creating contexts for self-authorship in campus work settings. When supervisors allow students to incorporate themselves in work and show that they value the student's capability, it can lead to positive confidence-building and aid in developing an internal sense of self. DJ expressed appreciation for trust from her supervisor:

> I guess I like being able to know that my manager had trust in me to send out the correct orders to the correct place … that's the main part that I liked, that she gained trust in me to not just be supervising me 24/7 and just having trusted me.

Astrid discussed the importance of trust when her supervisor asked her to work full-time in the position of a former staff member and role model. Astrid's supervisor "invited the self to become a central part of making sense of and doing one's work" (Baxter Magolda, 2004, p.250). This experience also likely helped Astrid maintain a more substantial level of commitment and interest with her work at Disability Services.

Career Construction Stories

Savickas' (2019) career construction theory aims to write career as a story. It involves explicit plots and events of life that construct micronarratives of meaning. These short stories build into the individual's understanding of career choice in these areas helps the client adapt through work. Career counselors use the intervention framework to help clients to design their life through expression and reflection. These personal micronarratives reveal motivations for

actions and client behaviors. All the participants could express various experiences that have built into how they view career and their goals. The short stories expressed by the students, while highlighting the meaning gained from their work-study, also revealed a disconnect for some in fully understanding their chosen career goal.

Based on the demographic survey, the lowest proficiency rating for the career competencies was *career management* which NACE defined as:

> Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace (NACE, 2019, "Competencies" section).

The low participant average for this competency aligned with their stories on how they viewed what would be necessary for their professional goals. The disconnect appeared first with DJ when she expressed that as a psychology major, her end goal was to become a psychiatrist:

> Oh well growing up, I've been to therapy and I don't think I've ever gotten the help that I needed cause it's still up to this point … I still feel like I need it. So I the first time I went the lady was very brief, very uninterested. It was different therapist, and she laughed at my problems. And then the third one was okay, but still I feel like… there could have been a better way to have for me to get help. And then also my brother who he was suicidal, and he could have gotten better help but he didn't because of the resources. So that's one of the main factors 'cause I don't want people like me to go through that anymore. So it was just something that really touched me…

DJ's primary passion was mental health, and the spark and goal for having a career in mental health were rooted in her personal experience and her brother's experience with therapy. It also appeared that her goal professionally was to improve the therapy experience for others. If her primary goal and expectation are to evaluate and provide treatment for mental disorders or offer solutions for how to cope with mental stressors, a role as a psychiatrist will not fulfill this desire. Based on the interview, it appeared DJ believed she had constructed a clear career path based on her personal experiences with mental health, but greater exposure to her career options is needed.

Through her work experience, DJ had developed her soft skills and pinpointed what she would like in a future career; however, it seemed DJ needed to explore career paths further to understand what roles would best suit her.

Maria also showcased some disconnect in their career choice that could be enhanced through further career discovery. Maria was also a psychology major and expressed that her career goal was to become a pediatrician. She knew that she would enjoy a career "if the end goal is working with kids." She discussed that as a medical professional, she would enjoy working in teams and collaborating in diverse groups. However, Maria's story only focused on a few aspects of diversity being diverse personalities and ethnic/racial backgrounds and not to a broader understanding. Maria also recognized that she does not "like communicating with people that much" and preferred independent work. As a pediatrician, not only would Maria serve children, but she would also have to continually communicate with others and work with parents.

Emily identified some skills developed through her work-study experience that would translate into human resources and marketing. However, she also showed some disconnect in understanding the actual role. In her current work-study role, Emily expressed that she disliked dealing with upset callers, did not enjoy filing, organizational tasks, and resolving student conflicts. While she has had more engagement with her field than other participants, her dislikes are key aspects of a career in human resources.

In comparison, Astrid, Sophia, and Kara appeared to have a better understanding of their career choice and could articulate the necessary experiences needed to pursue that career. For Astrid, she was the only student with an active internship during her work-study experience, so this certainly added to her career management skill. Still, she strived to improve upon skills in her work-study that she felt would benefit her as a teacher such as being firm, communicating,

and leadership. Kara highlighted her communication skill and also key next steps that would help her to become an environmental consultant or have some type of related career. Sophia was already in the process of studying for the LSAT and also was actively engaged in learning to ensure she was equipped for her goals. These students were actively constructing their careers without disconnects.

Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed the six case studies in a descriptive format to highlight their individual experiences of working in their respective roles on-campus. Following each case overview, the within-case themes were presented and discussed. The conceptual theoretical framework was reintroduced, and a cross-case analysis was presented with overarching themes and then analyzed through the theories for each area of the conceptual framework. The following and closing chapter will provide an overall summary of the findings, address limitations, offer future recommendations for research, and discuss implications for policy and practice in higher education.

CHAPTER 5. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, & IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents an overview and purpose of the overall study, including the central research question and findings. The comprehensive theoretical framework that serves as the lens to analyze each case will be addressed. The chapter will illuminate the prominent key results of the study. The chapter will also address limitations and provide suggestions for future research. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a discussion of implications for both P-12 and higher education stakeholders.

Summary of Findings

As a career counselor, I became curious about the experiences of on-campus student employees after observing student workers in different on-campus departments, including in my previous role as a graduate assistant. In that role, I directly supervised about five student workers. Furthermore, having interacted with many students in individual student career appointments, I noticed some students would neglect to include their on-campus employment experiences on their resume. Students would also downplay their work-study experience, and only after discussion would they begin to think more about the skills they might have developed. Understanding that the primary purpose of FWS was to provide low-income students with work experience, I was curious to know how students were making meaning of this on-campus opportunity.

Throughout my graduate studies, I also developed interests in understanding Latinx student populations and how they experienced college life. Creating supportive and empowering spaces for this student population was important to me. I recognized through the literature how vital it was to prepare this growing student population for career success after graduation. I also noticed that there was a paucity of research on Latinx students' career development and the

intersection with undergraduate employment. I wanted to know if the work experience differed for diverse populations like Latinx students. The purpose of this study was to describe how Latinx students employed in at least one semester of an on-campus Federal Work-study position made meaning of their employment experience.

Central Research Question

The central research question that guided this study was, "How do Latinx students connect on-campus work-study experiences to employability?" Based on the literature, the definition of employability, the factors employers considered for hiring new employees, and the influences on employability skills are fluid and dynamic. I defined employability as an understanding of an individual's unique skills or competencies that allow that person to obtain and maintain employment. Understanding how Latinx students prepared for future careers and their experiences of campus work was a gap in the literature that needed to be addressed. According to NASFAA reports (NASFAA, 2016b), research on the effectiveness of the FWS program and student experiences, especially underrepresented populations, were lacking. FAOs' failed to collect this type of data because of the breadth of their current responsibilities and inefficient staffing to undertake such data collection.

Career skills are essential to success in the job search and workplace. Students gained these skills differently and made sense of their experiences in a variety of ways. Baxter Magolda (2004) posited that in order for a student worker to develop an internal sense of self and have confidence in their work philosophies, they needed the proper environment to "construct [their] own visions, to make informed decisions in conjunction with coworkers, to act appropriately, and to take responsibility for those actions" (p.14). Students can push themselves to succeed and make the most of an opportunity, which forms an internal self, but this can be difficult to do if

the campus work environment is not framed as educational or a necessary component of constructing one's career.

Based on the purpose of this multiple case study, the researcher explored the experiences of six undergraduate Latinx women who worked in an on-campus position funded by FWS. The participants worked in the different on-campus departments for varying lengths of time: 1) SUU Disability Services, 2) SUU Career Services, 3) the Financial Aid Office, 4) the Admissions Office, 5) the Eye Center, 6) The College of Architecture,7) and the Dean's Office for the College of Liberal Arts. Some students had previous work experience outside the campus while others experienced their first job through FWS.

Data gathered for this case study included individual semi-structured interviews, documentation, researcher written artifacts, and archival records. This study yielded three key findings from commonalities among the students' experiences, which produced three themes: 1) Building Key Career Skills, 2) Convenience Makes a Difference, 3) Impact of Workplace Representation and Positive Supervision. In addition to these three themes, the research also revealed additional findings regarding participant experiences in understanding their chosen career path.

Most of the participants would have preferred a role more relevant to their current area of study but found that the flexibility of work-study allowed them to better focus on their academic coursework. The convenience of work-study played a significant role in the student experience. This benefit of work-study allowed the students to engage in other extracurricular activities and commitments, while still having a source of income to fund diverse needs like school supplies, food, or car insurance. Negative aspects of work-study employment included feelings of "boredom," fulfilling the hour commitment with homework, and adjusting to different supervisor

leadership styles. Students desired to be challenged in the workplace and wanted more engagement in their roles.

The majority of the participants described that they developed general soft skills centered around customer service, communication, conflict management, teamwork, and leadership, which could be attributed to the administrative focus of their roles. Some of these skills, from their perspective, overlapped with what they believed their chosen careers would require. Understanding these skills and articulating how they gained these skills would be helpful as students pursue other opportunities more directly aligned with their chosen career goals. However, the majority of the on-campus departments did not appear to make a concerted effort to align work-study to the participant's future career goals. The quality of these FWS experiences could still be enhanced.

Re-Visiting the Theoretical Framework

The comprehensive theoretical framework is comprised of Krumboltz Happenstance Learning Theory (2009), Savickas' Career Construction Theory (2006), and Baxter Magolda's Theory of Self Authorship (2004). These theories were selected because each component related to an element of career development that could serve as the lens to explore meaning made through on-campus student employment. The concept of *meanings* made through student-employment was based on how students made sense of their employment: the impact of the experience, how students reflected on their roles and participation in the workplace, and if they felt the experience helped to construct their career.

As shown through previous research on career development, chance events are significant in the career development (Betsworth & Hansen, 1996; Bright et al., 2005; Hirschi, 2010; Kim et al., 2014). Krumboltz (2009) emphasized the creation of learning opportunities through any

serendipitous or planned experience. Krumboltz (2009) argued that chance events and planned experiences both foster learning when individuals are open-minded and recognize that different situations in life can provide a wealth of opportunities to take advantage of. In this study, there were examples given by the majority of participants that illustrated ways they recognized an opportunity for growth and learning through their work-study. All the students happened upon their work-study position by either browsing for open roles through the SUU career services portal or by connecting with a staff member at the on-campus career fair. Students illustrated examples of happenstance through unplanned and planned events. Sophia, Astrid, DJ, and Maria all addressed how they engaged in learning through their work-study either by learning their preferences for work, experiencing new challenges or by taking the initiative to improve on specific skills. Out of all the participants, Sophia showcased a growth mindset by seeking opportunities for learning and challenge, which was her primary motivator for seeking work-study. Kara and Emily connected their extracurricular involvement more to their careers than their experience from work-study. They showcased that chance external experiences like volunteering or involvement in on-campus organizations were more impactful in their career journey than what they were exposed to in their work-study roles.

Few participants demonstrated a true shift into having an internal, self-authored foundation because of the nature of their work, which was more task-oriented instead of being centered around autonomy to understand their contribution to the work. Baxter Magolda (2004) stressed that new experiences, whether good or bad, can help students develop an internal sense of self and push them forward on their journey to self-authorship. However, each student showed growth in their journeys. For some students, they faced challenges where they saw a need to build their internal definition and answer the self-authorship questions of “Who am I?” and

"How do I know?" For other participants, they either entered college with a clear vision and growth mindset, or they began to listen to their values and cultivate their own beliefs. This was enhanced by having supervisors who were caring and engaged as mentors for students. Supervisors that challenged students to think critically about their actions or that allowed students to contribute to different office projects or initiatives then invited students to engage in learning during their work-study. Based on these findings, work-study environments with supervisors who view their roles as educators and that build the experience around education and learning have a positive influence on how students benefit from the experience.

Lastly, Savickas (2006) suggested that people build upon various short stories in their lives that culminate in micronarratives. These micronarratives and external influences play a role in forming an identity narrative to create a structured work life. The world of work is ever-changing, and students employ different strategies in order to meet their personal goals and act on their career choices. All the participants were highly motivated and represented underserved communities in education. Each student sought out their opportunities but showed that they still lacked an understanding of what their chosen careers entail. Career management was the lowest competency rated by the students, which revealed that all the participants would benefit from further career exploration and planning. DJ, Maria, and Emily showed that they misunderstood their chosen career path and may have poorly constructed their career choice. This may be due to a lack of exposure to their chosen career paths, which could be remedied through shadowing or internships. It may also be due to a lack of knowledge based on their career exploration in the P-12 sector. This contrasted with the other half of participants who had more explicit understandings of their chosen path and understood what paths they could take to achieve their goals.

The framework used in this research helped to address the gaps in the literature: Few studies have explored how self-authorship and career development align for students, especially in work-study settings (Baxter Magolda, 2004; Creamer & Laughlin, 2005; Nadelson et al., 2015). Also, few studies investigated the impact of chance events on career decision-making in higher education settings and how students construct meaning from these experiences. In summary, this framework and perspective provided new insights into the student employment experience and documented the career stories of Latinx students.

Implications

The overall study provided insights on how Latinx students employed through work-study made sense of their work experience and if they connected their on-campus employment to employability. Based on the findings, it has implications for both P-12 educators and for higher education administrators concerning career readiness and for improving the effectiveness of the FWS program.

P-12 Career Readiness

While academic achievement and college access are important, career readiness is also a critical factor. The P-12 setting is the foundational space to begin career exploration. Based on a survey of public attitudes on the state of public education, Ferguson (2017) reported that "82% of Americans now support classes that teach job or career skills" in K-12 schools (p.42). College and career readiness have been a concern for students, parents, teachers, guidance counselors, and even community members (Yamamura et al., 2010).

Nonetheless, policymakers have not made career readiness a real priority in the P-12 system. While Emily, DJ, Astrid, Kara, Maria, and Sophia articulated skills and stories of growth and challenge through their work-study, a few of them misunderstood their chosen career goals.

Based on their interviews, these students showed that greater exploration of their chosen careers or more career exposure is needed. A possible answer for why this disconnect occurred could be rooted in systemic deficits in P-12 education.

The Common Core State Standards and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) established federal standards that included provisions to ensure proper skills are met for college and career readiness. Each state has different requirements and methods to address Common Core and meet these standards for students through the curriculum. The shared elements of career readiness and college readiness involved learning skills such as study skills, time management, grit, self-awareness, or technological proficiency (Conley, 2013). These skills are first discovered in the classroom. Career readiness is essential so that students can adapt to changes and shifts in the workforce. Conley (2013) stated:

> Allowing all students to go through secondary school with no help on setting goals or shaping career interests creates a tremendous advantage for students who receive constant help, encouragement, and even pressure outside school from parents, siblings, and their wider social networks to prepare for their future (p. 46).

One recommendation to tackle this issue is as institutions of higher education develop quality teachers and school counselors. Faculty should encourage these budding professionals to engage in courses and programs focused on college and career readiness so that P-12 educators are better equipped on how to incorporate these ideas into the curriculum. These strategies can be implemented early on in preschool or kindergarten so that discussions of career are embedded in student learning while a child's self-concept is still being developed (Curry & Milsom, 2017). Depending on the subject area and grade level, teachers could develop activities that expose students to different careers and opportunities. This objective could be done either through creative classroom assignments like career presentations or through engagement with professionals outside the classroom setting.

Like Savickas' (2019) Career Construction Interview, school counselors could create a culture of college and career by utilizing assessments to encourage students to discover their career personality, interests, and values. A focus must be placed on career exploration and development so that students can better make meaning and understand how to navigate career decisions and choose a college major. Tackling these areas during elementary and middle school may help provide students with a clear framework and foundation for choosing careers moving forward.

There is a cultural component to career and college readiness that should also be considered. Literature showed (Duncheon, 2018; Flink, 2018; Gonzalez, 2015; Tello & Lonn, 2017) that Latinx students are underserved in education and could be better supported. This population is vulnerable and has hurdles to overcome with access to college and careers. Further, Latinx students face systemic barriers to college readiness programs (Flink, 2018; Gonzalez, 2015; Santiago & Cunningham, 2005; Yamamura et al., 2010). Teachers and school counselors should be equipped with more diversity training to learn the needs of Latinx students and how to support this population. School counselors and teachers should also make attempts to appreciate the diversity within the Latinx community, including distinct cultural values. Family support and obligations are significant for children of immigrant families, which contribute to life decisions and future aspirations (Fulgini, 2006). Martinez (2013) addressed the concept of *familismo* (familism), where Latinx students feel a sense of responsibility and obligation to the family. In her study, familismo appeared with college choice and also influenced decision making. For some students in this study, familismo appeared in their desire to contribute to family income or relieve a financial burden. Increased involvement with families on the topic of career and college access could also improve outcomes for this population.

Lastly, all of the participants in the study were female. Therefore, it is also important to acknowledge the barriers that women face in careers and post-graduation outcomes. Some of the participants desired to pursue careers in STEM. While women are still underrepresented in STEM fields, educators should make efforts to improve students' confidence and self-efficacy to encourage ways for how they can actualize their career goals.

Higher Education Practice

A prominent FWS issue concerns how federal funds are allocated to institutions, and this is an issue that policymakers have not yet solved. As research has shown, a better framework would allow more low-income students to be served and could expand funding (Baum, 2019; O'Sullivan and Setzer, 2014). The current "fair share" formula provides funding to institutions that enroll smaller numbers of low-income students. According to Baum (2019):

> Current FWS funds may be important to the institutions where they are concentrated and to individual recipients, but the program's scale makes it impossible that this program, as it is now structured and funded, makes a major difference in how students finance their postsecondary education or in how well work during college strengthens postcollege employment opportunities (p.13).

Some students with unmet need and will turn down their work-study award because they could earn more money in an off-campus role. It may take more discussions at the federal level to assess the best path to address this issue and increase employment opportunities. Therefore, higher education stakeholders should reconsider the primary goals of the FWS program and enhance the quality of current jobs to make students employable with work-study. On-campus student employment, as shown through this study, can have the potential for learning and growth if the work environment is built to nurture this type of education. Students are more engaged when they push themselves to succeed, but the right learning environment may help to foster growth and self-authorship. Each participant indicated a career skill that they believed would be

beneficial in their career journeys. However, common student issues included being disengaged by repetitive tasks, feelings of "boredom," and disconnect in career decision- making. A key factor to consider as policymakers attempt to make improvements to the Federal Work-Study is "the nature of the jobs FWS provides and the marketable skills these jobs foster" (Baum, 2019, p. 11).

Administrators can make attempts to enhance the quality of placements today to the best of their ability while policymakers discuss ways to improve the funding and structure of the program. Some students enter a degree program and may not truly understand the daily functions and responsibilities of their chosen career. Also, many students register as "undecided" for their chosen major as they enter college. It would be important for these students to recognize their values, career interests, and the skills they believe they need to develop. Engaging Latinx students early in their college career is also essential, knowing that they may come into higher education spaces lacking the social capital needed to be successful. Therefore, before students apply to their work-study position, it may be beneficial first to encourage them to take some type of career assessment.

An career focused assessment would help them better understand their skills and interests but could also match them to a work-study position that aligned with their assessment results. By having an established matching system, career development and decision-making would then be embedded at the forefront of the experience. Many of the students in this study would have preferred a work-study position better aligned with their career goals, so a matching system may have helped to resolve this issue since a directly related role was not available.

According to Lewis (2010), like other student development programs, learning outcomes can be embedded in student employment so that students have richer experiences than

completing their administrative tasks. For the student onboarding process in work-study, students may benefit from an initial discussion on what to expect from their work-study opportunity and how career development would be part of the experience. This could be in the form of an online module or through the actual work-study job posting. As students first begin their work experience, they may also benefit from a discussion with their immediate supervisor about their career goals and what they hope to achieve during work-study to have a tailored learning experience. A pre-evaluation could shape the work-study experience, along with a mid-semester evaluation, followed by an exit interview to understand if the student met their goals. These evaluations could also introduce students to the type of performance evaluations that they would see in a professional setting. These goals could also follow the student if they chose to change their work department, so other supervisors are aware of the skills the student wants to master.

Without proper planning, the student work experience could be a missed opportunity for mentorship and development. Supervisors play a key role in creating spaces for learning and self-authorship within work-study experiences. The participants in this study showcased that when students have supportive and engaged supervisors, they tend to have more meaningful work-study experiences. Supervisors who showed trust in their student employee, challenged the student to think more about their actions or asked a student to participate in projects, provided greater opportunities for learning. Dweck (2010) stated that in order "to prepare students to benefit from meaningful work, therefore, teachers need to create a growth-mindset culture in the classroom" (p.18). She explained that through praise and encouragement for effort and strategies instead of focusing on speed, teachers could design meaningful learning tasks. Dweck (2010) argued that "Meaningful work not only promotes learning in the immediate situation but also promotes a love of learning and resilience in the face of obstacles" (p.20). Similarly, a nurturing

work environment can help students develop, and this concept can be compared to the workplace.

If supervisors view their roles less like managers and more as educators, work-study experiences could be more fruitful. A workspace conceptualized by learning could challenge students if supervisors: 1) establish goals early on for the work-study experience, 2) allow students to mutually construct effective ways of working through collaborating with their peers, and 3) build more responsibility into student roles as they gain experience (Baxter Magolda, 2004). Supervisors could be more engaged by having a training where they are aware of best practices, different types of mentorship styles, and how to engage different student populations like Latinx students. Also, training sessions where supervisors could learn from other departments and have more guidance on how to meet student needs would cater to that awareness.

Mentorship and supervision also had a powerful influence on how students viewed their work experience and their career possibilities. Having a mentor of the same racial or ethnic identity has a strong impact, especially if the engagement was positive (Alcocer & Martinez, 2018). Alcocer and Martinez (2018) noted that "For minorities, mentors provide genuine concern for their welfare, practice cultural sensitivity, and appreciate the unique individuality of the protégé" (p. 399). Casner-Lotto and Barrington (2006) also supported the idea that mentorship could enhance workplace skills. It was also impactful for students to see professionals of their racial identity in leadership roles. Therefore, this supports the idea of having more diverse representation in the workplace to foster spaces for mentorship. The majority of participants enrolled at SUU because of the diversity and representation of different ethnicities, including the Latinx community. Diversity was an important aspect of their college choice. The diverse

environment of HSIs for Latinx students seemed to play a role in how they viewed careers. Gushue (2006) noted that Latinx students at HSI's have a stronger ability to engage in career decision making. HSI's create spaces and environments of acceptance, which can foster spaces for mentorship and career guidance (Guardia & Evans, 2008; Arbello-Marrero & Milacci, 2016).

Lastly, for career decision-making, another solution in higher education might be to build more career courses in the curriculum. Administrators could push for making these courses mandatory. Fouad et al. (2016) argued for having major and career planning courses as part of the college experience. Fouad et al. (2016) "found that the major/career planning course had a statistically significant effect on students' occupational engagement and aspects of student career construction" (p.463) Courses like this may provide more knowledge and resources to help students make informed career decisions.

Future Research

The voices and experiences of students employed by work-study had not been explored, especially specific to underserved populations. Much of previous research focused on student academic achievement while working, or the broad benefits that working on campus can bring (Parker et al., 2016; Scott-Clayton, 2011; Scott-Clayton & Minaya, 2015; Soliz & Terry Long, 2016; Stinebrickner & Stinebrickner, 2003). This study also highlighted the work experiences of six Latina students at an HSI. No studies on the FWS program specifically focused on how the program impacted underrepresented populations like Latinx students.

This study was designed to understand how students made sense of their work-study employment and if they connected this experience to employability or understood what skills they would need to pursue their chosen careers. This study provided another perspective on student meaning-making through the lenses of happenstance, self-authorship, and career

construction. Few studies explored student employment through these lenses to capture student experiences.

The perspectives of supervisors of different on-campus sites were not reflected in this study. Future research could expand on this study by exploring the challenges supervisors may face in providing a more meaningful experience. The researcher also learned more about JLD programs and other successful job preparation programs at other institutions. Further research could be conducted to gather best practices to be implemented at other schools. Another suggested topic of study could also explore the work experiences of graduate students who participate in FWS and their career outcomes. Lastly, some participants in this study had just started their work-study experience while other students had been working in their position for a few semesters. Future research could explore self-authorship and student career development in the form of a longitudinal study from freshman year until graduation to note other impacts and influences on career decision making that may not have been apparent in this study.

Conclusion

This chapter concluded the research study. The purpose of the study and central research question was addressed along with a discussion of the main findings. The comprehensive theoretical framework of happenstance, self-authorship, and career construction was re-visited in relation to the findings. Finally, recommendations for both P-12 and higher education were made for how cultures of career readiness can be improved and how Latinx students can be supported in their career decision making and their work experiences.

APPENDIX A. IRB APPROVAL

ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST

Institutional Review Board
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair
130 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.5983
irb@lsu.edu
lsu.edu/research

To: Jennifer Curry
Education

From: Dennis Landin
Chair, Institutional Review Board

Date: August 1, 2019

Re: **IRB#** E11789

Title: A chance for success: Understanding how Latinx students make meaning of federal work-study employment

New Protocol/Modification/Continuation: New Protocol

Review Date: 7/31/2019

Approved X **Disapproved**

Approval Date: 8/1/2019 **Approval Expiration Date:** 7/31/2022

Exemption Category/Paragraph: 2c

Signed Consent Waived?: Yes

Re-review frequency: (three years unless otherwise stated)

LSU Proposal Number (if applicable):

By: Dennis Landin, Chairman DLandin

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –
Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE: When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.**

* *All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at http://www.lsu.edu/irb*

APPENDIX B. PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Welcome to the study!
Please read this informed consent before you decide whether or not to participate in this study.

Study Title: A chance for success: Understanding how Latinx students make meaning of federal work-study employment

Study Description: The purpose of this study is to describe how Latinx students employed in at least one semester of an on-campus Federal Work-study position make meaning of their employment experience. Results of this study should provide more insight into the current value of on-campus employment and how these outcomes can influence a student's personal career development.

This online survey is the first portion of the study which should take less than 10 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, there will be a section for you to provide your contact information for an in-person interview if you are interested.

The in-person interview will last for no longer than one hour and will be held in an agreed-upon location. You would be asked to discuss your on-campus work-study experience. The interview will be recorded and transcribed to ensure the accuracy of the data collected.

Subjects: To meet the participant criteria for this study, you must be: 1) a current undergraduate student enrolled at least part-time 2) identify as Hispanic or Latino/a/x 3) currently in an on-campus work-study position and have a least one semester of work experience in an on-campus work-study

Anticipated Risks of Participation: There are no anticipated risks to participants.

Benefits: Participants who complete the survey and are selected for the interview portion of the study will receive a **$15.00 Amazon Gift Card** for volunteering. The gift card will be presented to the participant at the beginning of the in-person interview. The information gained from this research may benefit future on-campus student employees to enhance their work experience.

Investigators: The following investigators are available for questions about this study Monday – Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Raylea Rideau, (281) 704-7006, rbarro5@lsu.edu; Dr. Jennifer Curry, 111K Peabody Hall, (225) 578- 2202, jcurry@lsu.edu.

Performance Site: University of Houston

Number of Subjects: Anticipate a maximum number of six (6) study participants.

Privacy: Your identity will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used for each person such that names are not revealed. All identifying information will be removed from the data set. When the study is complete and the data is analyzed, the list of participants will be destroyed. Your

name will not be used in any report. The consent forms will be stored separately from paper or electronic copies for a minimum of 3 years.

Right to Refuse: Your participation in this study is voluntary. Subjects may choose not to participate or to withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled.

You may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigators. If you have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, you can contact Dennis Landin, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, or www.lsu.edu/research.

By clicking the button below, you acknowledge that your participation in the study is voluntary, you are 18 years of age, and that you are aware that you may choose to terminate your participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

Please note that this survey will be best displayed on a laptop or desktop computer. Some features may be less compatible for use on a mobile device.

I consent, begin the study _____

I do not consent, I do not wish to participate _____

APPENDIX C. RECRUITMENT EMAIL

My name is Raylea Rideau, and I am pursuing my Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Research with a specialization in Higher Education at Louisiana State University (LSU). The title of my dissertation is "A Chance for Success: Understanding How Latinx Students Make Meaning of Federal Work-Study Employment." Through collaboration with University Career Services, I am reaching out to you in the hopes that you would be interested in serving as a participant in my dissertation research.

The purpose of this study is to describe how Latinx students employed by college work-study make meaning of their employment experience. It is my hope that this study will further examine the effectiveness of campus work-study and illuminate how students connect on-campus work to their overall career development. The information gained from this research may benefit future on-campus student employees to enhance their work experience.

I invite you to participate in the first portion of the study which involves an online survey that should take approximately 10 – 15 minutes to complete. At the end of survey, there will be a section for interested participants to provide their contact information and availability for an in-person interview. The interview should last for no longer than one hour and will be held in an agreed-upon location. All participant responses will be kept confidential.

Six participants who fully complete the attached demographic survey and are selected to participate in an in-person interview will receive a $15.00 Amazon Gift Card.

At the start of this survey, you will see an informed consent form. By filling out the survey, you give your consent to participate in the study. However, you may choose not to participate or to withdraw at any time.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please click the link below to open the attached survey: http://lsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eheoAJSD0TeX1pr

The survey will close on **Friday, November 8, 2019**.

Thank you for considering my request for your participation. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (281) 704 – 7006 or via email at rbarro5@lsu.edu

Kindest Regards,
Raylea Rideau

Raylea D. Rideau
PhD Candidate
MA Higher Education Administration, Louisiana State University
mobile: 281-704-7006
email: rbarro5@lsu.edu

APPENDIX D. DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1 Please enter your first and last name in the form below.

Q2 To which gender identity do you most identify?

Male
Female
Non-binary
Prefer not to answer

Q3 What is your age?

Q4 Are you Hispanic or Latino/a/x?

☐ No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
☐ Yes

If yes, please provide country/countries of ethnic origin, for example, Mexican, Honduran, Dominican, etc.

_____

Q5 Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be:

White
Black or African American
American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
Other (specify)

Q6 Please tell us your current major and/or minor.

Q7 Are you enrolled part-time or full-time?

☐ Part-time
☐ Full-time

Q8 What is your classification?

☐ Freshman
☐ Sophomore
☐ Junior
☐ Senior

Q9 Are you currently in a position of on-campus employment funded through Federal Work-Study?

□ No
□ Yes

If yes, please indicate place of on-campus employment.

_____

Q10 Please indicate the date range for how long you have been employed in your current on-campus work-study position.

□ 0 – 2 months
□ 2 – 4 months
□ 4 – 6 months
□ 6+ months

Q11 How many hours per week do you work at your work-study?

□ 1 – 5
□ 5 – 10
□ 10 – 15
□ 15 – 20

Q12 Do you currently have additional employment outside of your work-study?

□ No
□ Yes

If yes, please indicate your other current place of employment.

_____

Q13 According to The National Association for Colleges and Employers (NACE), there are eight core competencies or skills that employers want to see in entry-level hires (2019).

Please read each competency description and rate your proficiency on a scale of 1 (Not at All Proficient) – 4 (Very Proficient).

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving: "Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness" (NACE, 2019, "Competencies" section).

□ 1 Not at All Proficient □ 2 Somewhat Proficient □3 Proficient
□ 4 Very Proficient

Oral/Written Communications: "Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively" (NACE, 2019, "Competencies" section).

□ 1 Not at All Proficient □ 2 Somewhat Proficient □3 Proficient
□ 4 Very Proficient

Teamwork/Collaboration: "Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure and can negotiate and manage conflict" (NACE, 2019, "Competencies" section).

□ 1 Not at All Proficient □2 Somewhat Proficient □3 Proficient
□ 4 Very Proficient

Digital Technology: "Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies" (NACE, 2019, "Competencies" section).

□ 1 Not at All Proficient □ 2 Somewhat Proficient □3 Proficient
□ 4 Very Proficient

Leadership: "Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work" (NACE, 2019, "Competencies" section).

□ 1 Not at All Proficient □ 2 Somewhat Proficient □3 Proficient
□ 4 Very Proficient

Professionalism/Work Ethic: "Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes" (NACE, 2019, "Competencies" section).

□ 1 Not at All Proficient □ 2 Somewhat Proficient □3 Proficient

□ 4 Very Proficient

Career Management: "Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace" (NACE, 2019, "Competencies" section).

□ 1 Not at All Proficient □ 2 Somewhat Proficient □3 Proficient
□ 4 Very Proficient

Global/Intercultural Fluency: "Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences" (NACE, 2019, "Competencies" section).

□ 1 Not at All Proficient □2 Somewhat Proficient □3 Proficient
□ 4 Very Proficient

APPENDIX E. SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Research Question: How do Latinx students connect on-campus work-study experiences to employability?

Thank you for participating in this study. As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to describe how Latinx students employed in at least one semester of an on-campus Federal Work-study position make meaning of their employment experience.

- Describe your reasons for taking your work-study position.
- How did you select which work-study position you wanted to work in?
- Walk me through a typical day at your current work-study job.
    - What are your responsibilities?
- Tell me about some of the tasks you enjoy doing at your work-study.
    - What tasks do you dislike (if any)?
- What are positive aspects of this position that stand out to you?
- What frustrations do you experience while doing this work?
- Describe your working relationship with your supervisor(s).
    - How were you trained for this position?
- How would you describe the culture where you work?
    - Describe your relationships with your coworkers.
    - Tell me about a meaningful interaction you have had with your supervisor or coworkers. This can be a positive or negative experience.
- Would you change anything about this job?
- Based on your responses to the questionnaire, what skills/competencies do think you have gained from your work-study?

    - What skills do you think you need to grow in?

- What are your career goals?
    - Where do you see yourself working?
    - What led you to this career path?
    - How do you plan to achieve this goal?
- What have you learned in your work study that will be beneficial to you in your career?
- What have you learned about yourself?

If participant has additional current employment outside of work-study.

- Describe your other position outside of work-study.
    - What were your reasons for taking this position?
    - How would you compare this position to your work-study?

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Sincerely,
Raylea Rideau

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